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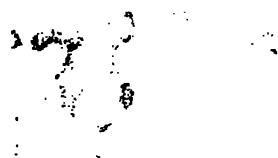
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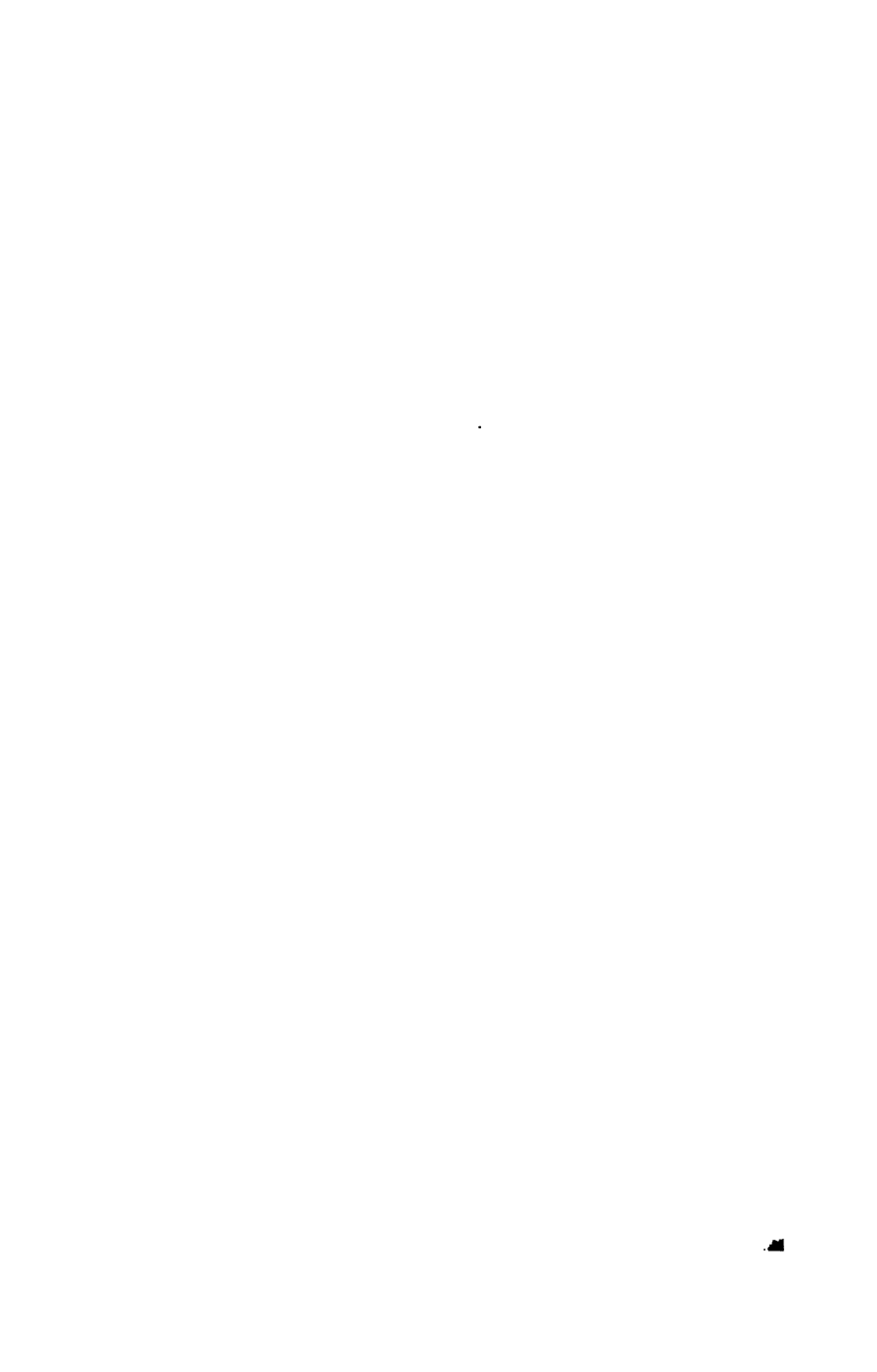
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JEREMY TAYLOR.

*Chaplain to King Charles the First,
and Bishop of Down & Connor.*

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SHERBOURN LANE

ESSAY,

L
JOSEPH RICKERBY, SHERBOURN LANE,

(KING WILLIAM STREET.)

1836.



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STREET

ESSAY,

4

JOSEPH RICKERBY, SHERBOURN LANE,

(KING WILLIAM STREET.)

1836.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

*Chaplain to King Charles the First.
and Bishop of Down & Connor.*

SELECT SERMONS:

VIZ:

THE MIRACLES OF THE DIVINE MERCY;
OF THE SPIRIT OF GRACE;
THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART:
THE MARRIAGE RING;
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS EVANGELICAL DESCRIBED;
THE CHRISTIAN'S CONQUEST OVER THE BODY OF SIN;
FIDES FORMATA; OR, FAITH WORKING BY LOVE;
FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS; OR, THE RIGHTEOUS
CAUSE OPPRESSED.

BY

JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO KING CHARLES THE FIRST, AND SOME TIME
LORD BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY THE

REV. R. CATTERMOLE, B.D.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY

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(KING WILLIAM STREET.)

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

"By the constitution of the Divine Providence and ecclesiastical affairs, all the great necessities of the church have been served by the zeal of preaching, and other holy ministries, in public or private, as they could be had. By this the apostles planted the church, and the primitive bishops supported the faith of martyrs, and the hardiness of confessors, and the austerity of the retired. By this they confounded heretics and evil livers, and taught them the ways of the Spirit. It was preaching that restored the splendour of the church, when barbarism, and wars, and ignorance either sat in or broke the doctor's chair in pieces; for then it was that divers orders of religious, and especially of preachers, were erected; God inspiring into whole companies of men a zeal of preaching. And by the same instrument God restored the beauty of the church, when it was necessary she should be reformed: it was the assiduous and learned preaching of those whom God chose for his ministers in that work, that wrought the advantages, and persuaded those truths which are the enamel and

beauty of our churches." Such, in regard to the usefulness and dignity of the ordinance of preaching, is the testimony of that celebrated ornament of the Church of England, with a selection from whose discourses we commence the series of Sermons which are to find a place in the 'SACRED CLASSICS.' "And,"—he adds, in language scarcely less applicable to the present times,—“and because by the same means all things are preserved, by which they are produced, it cannot but be certain, that the present state of the church requires a greater care and prudence in this ministry than ever; especially *since by preaching some endeavour to supplant preaching, and by intercepting the fruits of the flocks, to dishearten the shepherds from their attendances.*”¹

The faith of the pagan world sought neither to derive support nor to extend its usefulness by means of any such system of popular instruction as is here described. The pulpit, in Christian times the best ally of truth and virtue, found no place beside the blood-stained altars of superstition. Heathenism had its troops of sacrificers, its flamens, its augurs, its pontifices, but no *preacher*; for in the poverty of its truths it had no “good tidings” for the lips of the missionary; and, alike selfish and indifferent, it

¹ Taylor's Dedication of his Sermons to Lord Vaughan.

sought neither to impart nor to borrow, except as the slavish instrument of policy and conquest. The character of the preacher,—the apostle,—“the messenger and legate of heaven,”—could belong only to a religion whose principles are unmixed truth, whose aim is universality, whose motive is benevolence. How beautiful, in the silent obscurity of its birth, was that ordinance which was designed to effect the mightiest and most permanent of moral revolutions on our globe, and to bring together the ‘elect’—the *choice* of spiritualized humanity—in due time to be transported to heaven! Issuing from the remote capital of Judea, we trace the steps of a few noteless and unprovided wanderers, the disciples of One that had been violently and shamefully put to death. They proclaim, wherever they go, to as many as will hear, that that crucified individual was the expected Deliverer of the human race; that he has brought ‘life and immortality to light;’ and that it is ‘He that shall judge the quick and dead.’ Hopeless in such hands might seem the task to rouse a slumbering, to reform an evil, to propitiate a hostile world. But the fire is kindled; and these humble men are not to be discouraged. Vainly “stripes and imprisonments await them,”—the loud mockery of the rude multitude, and the subdued, but not less cruel derision of the polished and the great: an invincible patience, the offspring of sin-

cerity and faith, supports them: an ardent zeal, inspired from above, urges them onward, in spite of every impediment. Not many years have elapsed before the chief cities of Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, possess each its colony of converts, and every convert, in his turn, a preacher; while as the circle widens, including within its circumference Arabia and Egypt, Gaul, Spain, and even the furthest isles of the west of Europe, in the same proportion are the numbers of the faithful every where multiplied. It is to no purpose that 'the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed;' that the anger of the imperial despot is roused, and persecution, infatuated already, blinds herself more and more with the blood of her many victims. A dominion more ancient than that of the Cæsars shakes to its foundations: —the gain of the priest is withdrawn; the once-crowded temples of a multifold idolatry are well-nigh deserted; the smoke of altars becomes comparatively rare, and the images of those that "were no gods" begin to be left undecorated, to perish in solitariness and silence.

So far the missionaries of redemption were led by the immediate hand of Heaven; the unquestionable evidence of miracles, and the surviving impulse of the first outpouring of the Spirit from on high, had hitherto rendered unnecessary, and, in their esteem, even impious, the ordinary arts of persuasion

and conviction. Miracles, however, as become needless, and subject to abuse, like all sensible demonstrations of truth, by withdrawing the mind from the sources of inward conviction, were early discontinued; and Christianity, when thus effectually planted, was left to the general care of Divine Providence in the continued and unfailing watchfulness of its Author, and to the exertions of good and holy men, supplied with the ordinary aids of the Spirit. The simpler outlines of evangelical truth being already traced upon the popular mind, sermons now began to be something more than plain announcements of "the news that Christ had come into the world," to save sinners. When philosophers had embraced the new religion, and the state sought its alliance, and enquiring minds desired to be instructed in the extent of its moral applicability to the needs and exigencies of human life, then a more elaborate and artificial system of teaching was called forth. The preacher, at first brought up to some other occupation, and supporting himself in the intervals of his apostolic labours by his exertions in a worldly calling, was now set apart to the important office from his youth, furnished with the aids of learning, and trained in the arts of eloquence and disputation. He was required to be a polemic as well as a dogmatist; and that destruction of the edifice of idolatrous paganism, which the fervid might of inspiration

had commenced, as with the stroke of lightning from heaven, was now to be completed, by little and little, by means of the slow operation of argument, and the silent force of Christian example. The Apostles were complete in their simple inspiration—in the irresistible strength of a faith miraculously imparted. Again, the Fathers were no less fitted “to do the work of evangelists” in their times, by blending with and enriching what remained of the diviner qualifications which distinguished the first ministers of Christ, with a more liberal education, a more extensive acquaintance with mankind, and the dignity of superior stations. The models left, however, by Chrysostom and Augustin, by Tertullian and Clemens Alexandrinus, soon yielded to the innovations of men who partook in the corruption of succeeding ages. The style of preaching kept pace with the decline in manners and in oratorical genius, and the gradual adulteration of doctrine; and, notwithstanding the temporary success of the various orders of friars, who were instituted at different periods, for the express purpose of reforming the negligence and the abuses which existed among the clergy—but who by degrees became tainted with and increased the vices they were designed to correct—the method of instruction from the pulpit, which generally prevailed for several centuries preceding the Reformation, was calculated, by the ignorance of the orators, the trifling scholastic forms adopted, and

the useless and often ridiculous choice of subjects, rather to darken, to embarrass, and to mislead, than effectually to answer the ennobling and sanctifying ends of a CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

A new era of taste in popular composition on religious subjects, dawned simultaneously with the Reformation: Tyndale, Frith, Cranmer, and others of the early Reformers, but especially the venerable Latimer—that thorough specimen of a plain English divine—abound with passages in a style which, for fluency, ease, and unaffected simplicity, may vie with the best specimens of the Augustan age of our literature; while in earnestness—in the natural pathos of unaffected sincerity and singleness of purpose—they are not to be excelled. This apostolic plainness did not, however, survive beyond the first period of the Reformation—the period of its struggles and imperfection: with the men of more consummate learning, who occupied the eminent stations of the church in Elizabeth's reign, came back the subtle distinctions, the frequent quotations, and tedious subdivisions, of the scholastic divines. But these faults were counterbalanced by more than equal excellencies—by a profound acquaintance with Scripture and with the controversies of past ages, and the general history of the Church; often by great depth, originality, and variety of thought, and a fearless vigour and rich profusion of language.

Repulsive as we might suppose such faults to have appeared to the taste of the common people, while the excellencies with which they were connected must have been for the most part above their comprehension, it is difficult to account satisfactorily for the extraordinary popularity of pulpit eloquence in the period between the complete establishment of the Reformation and the close of the Stuart dynasty. Some causes, more or less obvious, may indeed be assigned. The interest of the mighty controversy between the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches had not yet wholly subsided; at intervals it was kept alive by fresh alarms and partial encounters, like the broken waves after a tempest; while the grounds of the dispute had, through the frequent and varied discussion of every controverted point, become familiar to the minds of all but the very lowest of the people. In the meantime, by the gradual growth and rising popularity of the Puritans—another party opposed, on contrary grounds, to the Church of England—polemical disputes had been still further disseminated and more earnestly promoted; the more so, as this party was yet in all the vigour of youth, though long repressed, and kept in comparative silence by legal restraint. Again, during that part of the period in question which was chiefly under the influence of the pulpit, namely the reign of Charles I., political excitement, which the pulpit

had, on both sides, been made the instrument of blowing up into a flame, now in its turn reacted upon the passions of religious disputants, and through them upon the people. Moreover, preaching was long confined to comparatively few ministers; men often of distinguished talents, and unburthened by the daily demands of a parochial charge: for between the preacher and the plain parish priest, though then sometimes, as now generally, united in the same person, there appears to have existed a distinction scarcely traceable in our times. Lastly, incomparatively less *civilized* as the great body of the people certainly were, we do not hesitate to express our belief, that men were far more alive in those days than in our own to those profound and awful emotions which it is the design of religious addresses to call up. Preaching was the grand national means of the people's cultivation—the only means; and they were intensely susceptible of its advantages. They had leisure too for thought and space for feeling, unconnected with bodily wants and privations, unknown to the same classes in these restless, overworked, and craving times. The chilling and absorbing pursuits of the merchant and the manufacturer—pursuits, which withdraw the mind too exclusively from questions of more permanent importance, and cast a damp over those affections whose sphere is the future and the invisi-

ble—were hitherto confined within a narrow circle. Something also may perhaps be justly ascribed to the energy and freedom with which the sermons of the seventeenth century were delivered. As far as we are acquainted with the mode of elocution generally in use, it appears to have been of all others the best adapted for an English Protestant congregation; that is to say, for hearers accustomed to reflect and acquainted with Scripture. The art of memory was diligently cultivated, but not exclusively relied upon. Without “making themselves slaves to syllables,”¹ our elder divines profoundly studied, meditated, and carefully impressed upon their minds, during the preceding week, the subject on which they proposed to address their congregations on the Sunday, with all its necessary divisions, statements, and illustrations; but we have no reason to believe that they trusted to their memories for every word, in its exact order. This is done in foreign churches; but not always with the best effect. It would indeed be difficult to show in what respects a proceeding so painful and so slavish, possesses any advantage over that pursued in the Church of England—at least when the written discourse is recited with all the freedom and effect, of which the example of many living divines proves this method to be capa-

¹ Bishop Hall, in his account of his own method, in “Some Specialties of his Life.”

ble. The proper use to be made of the manuscript in the pulpit, is as a beacon and occasional support—not as crutches to the lame, or a guide to the blind. From it the sermon should not be *read*, but *preached*. Such is the use that, from respect for the awful subjects on which they have to exercise their office, and from an anxious desire in no instance to mislead or offend their hearers, in matters of imperishable interest, judicious preachers will make of it; following, in this particular, the example of the greatest among their predecessors in the English Church, who were also perhaps the ablest Christian orators, though not the most accomplished pulpit *rhetoricians* of modern times.¹

In commencing that important feature of the ‘SACRED CLASSICS,’ which is to consist of a ‘Selection from the best Sermons of our English Divines,’ the first name which suggested itself to the Editors, was that of BISHOP TAYLOR. On more than one ground this author’s claim to the place assigned him is incontrovertible. His claim is that of the most distinguished ornament of our pulpit-literature, in its most distinguished period—of a preacher the most remarkable for genius, in a church which, among a host of such, can boast the names of a Hooker, a Donne, a Barrow, and a Horsley. But there is another reason, in itself

¹ See Walton’s *Lives of Donne and Sanderson*.

sufficient to vindicate the propriety of the choice. Though, as has been already stated, far from the earliest among our sermon-writers, he stands foremost in chronological order of those, whose compositions it could be reasonably expected to render acceptable to the prevailing taste of the various classes for whom the work is designed. It was Taylor who, of all our preachers, subsequent to the age of the Reformation, first clothed the "bare anatomy" of that science which has for its lofty argument God, and man, and virtue, and redemption—the eternal rewards of goodness, and the "deathless death" of the wicked—with the fulness and the bloom of life. He first, with a holy trust in his genius, taught and enlightened by an ardent love to God and man, launched forth from the straits and shallows of casuistry and formal logic, secure of finding his way into the deep regions of the heart and the conscience. He is ever, indeed, guided by the severest rules of argument; but the reader becomes aware of the fact rather from the force of his own convictions, than through the obstruction of the naked framework of the arrangement upon his attention. After the fashion of his time, he is familiar—needlessly, and, to a modern and unlearned reader, wearisomely familiar—alike with the celebrated and the obscure among the divines of former ages; but he also delights to exemplify the truths he teaches from the testimony of histo-

rians and the poets : he expatiates through all that, in ancient or modern record, tells of the beautiful and the fearful in our common humanity ; he realizes and brings home the lessons of the Gospel, by making himself, as it were, the companion and friend of his hearers in their silent solitary musings and busy occupations ; in the discharge of their relative duties as citizens, as well as in their hopes and fears as men ; in their domestic joys and sorrows, their retrospections and anticipations ; in a word, in every relation and circumstance of human life.

It is not, however, our intention to detain the pious reader from the banquet spread before him in the following pages, by any lengthened details upon that unexhausted subject of criticism, the literary and professional character of Bishop Jeremy Taylor. Let it suffice, warmly to recommend them to the serious study of all those who have never yet made the acquaintance of this extraordinary writer. Having once familiarized themselves with the peculiarities of his manner—having, under his guidance, risen to the lofty height, from whence he contemplates the doctrines of the cross, and the diversities of human character and life—no reader can fail to follow him with delight, and with a permanent advantage to his moral and spiritual being. Two in particular of the discourses which follow,

may be pointed out, as worthy of the highest praise. The "Miracles of the Divine Mercy," and the "Marriage Ring." Of these the former is perhaps the finest of all Taylor's Sermons; and it especially recommends itself to a place in a series like the present, by the comparative rareness of its learned quotations and remote allusions. With regard to the latter, in which a most important and neglected point of Christian ethics is treated in a very masterly manner, a considerable, but, it is hoped, not an injudicious freedom has been used, in the present edition, with a view to the convenience of the general reader, in pruning away such citations from profane authors, as are at best but unsightly excrescences to the ordinary eye. Those few curious scholars to whom it will be a disappointment to miss these redundances of a learned pen, are requested to weigh the motives which dictated their exclusion. Enough still remains to excite astonishment at the stores accumulated by the indefatigable students of the seventeenth century; for this is a merit—if such it be—which Taylor shared with many of his contemporaries. The same may be said of his lucid order; the severity of his logic; the genuineness of his piety, and his thorough acquaintance with Scripture and with systematic theology. But there is not one of the following Discourses which does not further exhibit him in some light in which

he stands pre-eminent ; as endowed with unrivalled wealth of imagination, with irresistible warmth of feeling, and with an exuberance of language equally surprising and overpowering.

After the Restoration, nearly all the faults of the old masters of pulpit-eloquence disappeared ; but, together with them, we miss too many also of their excellencies. With much that was far-fetched, "weary, and unprofitable," there likewise disappeared their fulness and grandeur of thought, their cordial homeliness of application, their masterly grasp of argument, their profundity and boldness of theological disquisition. (Another opportunity will occur to indicate the causes of this change : at present the fact is only briefly adverted to, as supplying the link of connexion between the preceding observations, and the few remarks, applicable to our own times, with which we shall conclude.) At length, as the middle of the last century approached, sermons had dwindled down to little more than tasteful moral essays—comments upon, and characters of the vices and virtues, which might have been heard with pleasure and approbation among the philosophers of the Porch or the Lyceum. From Sherlock, Tillotson, Atterbury, and Jortin, the public taste sank rapidly to a heartless acquiescence in the elegant inanity of the school of Blair and his thousand followers and imitators.

It is, however, now many years since a happy revolution has been taking place, both in the taste of congregations, and in the views and qualifications of the clergy, as regards their capacity of Christian orators. It would be no hard task to point out many volumes of discourses, which have been published within the last thirty years, pervaded by a spirit of piety so fervent as well as sound, by such an earnest purpose to devote gifts and acquirements of no common character, exclusively to the salvation of souls and to the increase of the Church, together with so much of the purity and divine force of Scriptural diction, as prove the writers to have drunk deeply at those sacred Fountains of Truth, which were "digged again"¹ by the Reformers.

It is, notwithstanding, too obvious, that the interests which impart their momentum to the present times, are unfavourable to the just influence of the pulpit. The press, a second powerful agent in the progression of the human race,—naturally the sister and ally of the Church, but more easily won over to the promotion of temporal aims,—has, by its subserviency to the passions and tendencies of the age, taken the precedence in the popular favour. Even the universal diffusion of imperfect and superficial knowledge has prevented this re-

¹ Gen. xxvi. 15, 18.

sult, by diverting and distracting the attention, and rendering the minds of men impatient of grave and substantial instruction. "The very length of the discourses, with which those 'rich souls of wit and knowledge' [the old divines] fixed the eyes, ears, and hearts of their crowded congregations, are a source of wonder now-a-days, and (we may add) of self-congratulation to many a sober Christian, who forgets with what delight he himself has listened to a two hours' harangue on a loan or tax, or on the trial of some remarkable cause or culprit."¹ Few things, indeed, have had a more unfortunate effect upon the modern orthodox pulpit, than the public indifference to religion, (indifference is not seldom the accompaniment of external decorum and respect,) as evinced in the tedium with which discourses are heard that exceed the narrow limits to which imperious custom has reduced the preacher. For, the sermon-writer, who is restricted to twenty or twenty-five minutes in the delivery of his compositions, is necessarily driven to one of two miserable alternatives: either he must relinquish as hopeless the treatment of any of the leading subjects of doctrine or morals as a whole, and confine himself to detached portions, or comparatively trivial topics; or, if he persist in taking a large and comprehensive view of his matter, he will be forced to exclude the

¹ "Lay Sermon to the Higher and Middle Classes."

richness of language, and the flow of thought, and the graceful amplitude of illustration, so necessary to true oratory ; thus presenting his hearers rather with an analysis than a free and flowing address—a skeleton, for a living and breathing form. The real profit of congregations would be much more effectually secured, if sermons were longer and less frequent : it is equally certain that such discourses as those of Taylor never could have been recited in our churches in modern times, on account of their length ; and that, if really attended to and understood, the hearer would derive more complete and lasting benefit from one such, than from several constructed upon the meagre scale now in fashion.

Still, however, within the prescribed bounds, a sphere is comprised worthy of our best exertions. If the means by which the effect is to be produced are narrowed, we are the more loudly called upon to labour strenuously to accomplish all we can within the allowed compass. Conciseness and simplicity are by no means to be confounded with poverty of matter or repulsive dryness of method. “How much learning and wisdom,” exclaimed a venerable archbishop, “are necessary to make these things plain !” He, after all, may justly be regarded as the most accomplished, and certainly will be the most effective, master of Christian eloquence, who can the most completely adapt the

results of extensive learning and profound meditation to the peculiarities of his age;—who to a thorough acquaintance, not only with the doctrines of the Bible and the mind of individual man, but with the history of nations, of churches, and of controversies, in short, with whatever can assist in developing the constitution and needs of our moral and spiritual being—who to all these, recommended by the graces of a devotional spirit and the silent eloquence of a bright example—adds the skill to go by the briefest and directest course to the hearts and consciences of his auditory.

We look, besides, for a providential change in the tendencies of the general mind, when the pulpit shall resume its pre-eminent power over the understandings and affections of the people. The ordinance of preaching, the means divinely instituted for the highest cultivation and improvement of the thoughts and habits of mankind, has doubtless yet a momentous and a noble part to perform, in bringing about what remains to be completed of the great designs of the allwise God in the work of human redemption. Let us only unite prayer with study, courage with humility, the confidence of a good hope with the strength of faithful endeavour; and assuredly we shall not miss the end of our “high calling.” In conclusion, we commend this volume, with heartfelt prayers for its utility to the reader, by permitting the gifted author

once more to speak for himself. "Sermons," says he, towards the close of the dedication before quoted, "are arguments against us, unless they make us better ; and no sermon is received as it ought, unless it makes us quit a vice or be in love with virtue,—unless we suffer it in some instance or degree to do the work of God upon our souls."

R. C.

June 24, 1834.

SELECT SERMONS.

SERMON I.

THE MIRACLES OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

PSALM LXXXVI. 5.

*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and
plenteous in mercy to all them that call on thee.*

PART I.

MAN having destroyed that which God delighted in, that is, the beauty of his soul, fell into an evil portion, and being seized on by the divine justice, grew miserable, and condemned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam, being banished and undone, went and lived a sad life in the mountains of India, and turned his face and his prayers towards Paradise; thither he sent his sighs, to that place he directed his devotions, there was his heart now, where his felicity sometimes had been: but he knew not how to return thither, for God was his enemy, and by many of his attributes opposed himself against him. God's power was armed against him; and poor man, whom a fly or a fish could kill, was assaulted and beaten with a sword of fire in the hand of a cherubim. God's eye watched him, his omniscience was man's accuser, his severity was the judge, his justice the executioner. It was a mighty

calamity that man was to undergo, when he that made him armed himself against his creature, which would have died or turned to nothing, if he had but withdrawn the miracles and the almightiness of his power : if God had taken his arm from under him, man had perished. But it was, therefore, a greater evil when God laid his arm on him, and against him, and seemed to support him, that he might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadnesses God remembered his own creature, and pitied it ; and, by his mercy, rescued him from the hands of his power, and the sword of his justice, and the punishment of his guilt, and the disorder of his sin ; and placed him in that order of good things where he ought to have stood. It was mercy that preserved the noblest of God's creatures here below ; he who stood condemned and undone under all the other attributes of God, was only saved and rescued by his mercy ; that it may be evident that God's mercy is above all his works, and above all ours, greater than the creation, and greater than our sins. As is his majesty, so is his mercy, that is, without measures and without rules, sitting in heaven and filling all the world, calling for a duty that he may give a blessing, making man that he may save him, punishing him that he may preserve him. And God's justice bowed down to his mercy, and all his power passed into mercy, and his omniscience converted into care and watchfulness, into providence and observation for man's avail ; and heaven gave its influence for man, and rained showers for our food and drink ; and the attributes and acts of God sat at the foot of mercy, and all that mercy descended upon the head of man. For so the light of the world in the morning of the

creation was spread abroad like a curtain, and dwelt no where, but filled the *expansum* with a dissemination great as the unfoldings of the air's looser garment, or the wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combination; but God gathered the beams in his hand, and united them into a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body of the sun; and he lent some to his weaker sister that walks in the night, and guides a traveller, and teaches him to distinguish a house from a river, or a rock from a plain field. So is the mercy of God, a vast *expansum* and a huge ocean; from eternal ages it dwelt round about the throne of God, and it filled all that infinite distance and space, that hath no measures but the will of God; until God, desiring to communicate that excellency and make it relative, created angels, that he might have persons capable of huge gifts; and man, who he knew would need forgiveness. For so the angels, our elder brothers, dwelt for ever in the house of their Father, and never brake his commandments; but we, the younger, like prodigals, forsook our Father's house, and went into a strange country, and followed stranger courses, and spent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family, and came to need another portion. For, ever since the fall of Adam, who, like an unfortunate man, spent all that a wretched man could need, or a happy man could have, our life is repentance, and forgiveness is all our portion; and though angels were objects of God's bounty, yet man only is, in proper speaking, the object of his mercy: and the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confined to a little ring, and dwelt here below; and here shall dwell below, till

it hath carried all God's portion up to heaven, where it shall reign and glory on our crowned heads for ever and ever !

But for him that considers God's mercies, and dwells awhile in that depth, it is hard not to talk wildly, and without art and order of discoursings. St. Peter talked he knew not what, when he entered into a cloud with Jesus on Mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride on the north wind, and pass between the sun and us. And when we converse with a light greater than the sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that atonement, which reconciles God to man, and man to felicity, it will be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much, and say but little : and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord by dazzled eyes, and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that run over, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the shower no otherwise but by spilling, and in artificial expressions and runnings over. But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the ocean, and to span the measures of eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation and experience, and tell concerning God's mercy as we do concerning God himself, that he is that great fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are refreshed. God's mercy is all this ; and we can only draw great lines of it, and reckon

the constellations of our hemisphere, instead of telling the number of the stars ; we only can reckon what we feel and what we live by : and though there be in every one of these lines of life enough to engage us for ever to do God service, and to give him praises ; yet it is certain there are very many mercies of God on us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel, nor see, nor understand as yet ; but yet we are blessed by them, and are preserved and secured, and we shall then know them, when we come to give God thanks in the festivities of an eternal sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider :—

1. That mercy, being an emanation of the Divine goodness on us, supposes us and found us miserable. In this account concerning the mercies of God, I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the creation, or any thing of the nature of man, nor tell how great an endearment God passed on us that he made us men, capable of felicity, apted with rare instruments of discourse and reason, passions and desires, notices of sense, and reflections on that sense ; that we have not the deformity of a crocodile, nor the motion of a worm, nor the hunger of a wolf, nor the wildness of a tiger, nor the birth of vipers, nor the life of flies, nor the death of serpents.

Our excellent bodies and useful faculties, the upright motion and the tenacious hand, the fair appetites and proportioned satisfactions, our speech and our perceptions, our acts of life, the rare invention of letters, and the use of writing and speaking at distance, the intervals of rest and labour, (either of which, if they were perpetual, would be

intolerable,) the needs of nature and the provisions of Providence, sleep and business, refreshments of the body and entertainments of the soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of bounty rather than mercy: God gave us these when he made us, and before we needed mercy; these were portions of our nature, or provided to supply our consequent necessities: but when we forfeited all God's favour by our sins, then that they were continued or restored to us became a mercy and therefore ought to be reckoned on this new account. For it was a rare mercy that we were suffered to live at all, or that the anger of God did permit to us one blessing, that he did punish us so gently: but when the rack is changed into an axe, and the axe into an imprisonment, and the imprisonment changed into an enlargement, and the enlargement into an entertainment in the family, and this entertainment passes on to an adoption; these are steps of a mighty favour, and perfect redemption from our sin: and the returning back our own goods is a gift and a perfect donative, sweetened by the apprehensions of the calamity from whence every lesser punishment began to free us. And thus it was that God punished us, and visited the sin of Adam on his posterity. He threatened we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved: we waited for death, and stood sentenced, and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasiness; and every day is a new reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the sun on that day; and at last, when we must die by the irreversible decree, that death is changed into a sleep, and that sleep is in the bosom of Christ, and there dwells all peace and security, and it shall pass forth into glo-

ries and felicities. We looked for a judge, and behold a Saviour! we feared an accuser, and behold an Advocate! we sat down in sorrow, and rise in joy: we leaned on rhubarb and aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian fig-trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed; but the rhubarb proved medicinal, and the rough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings; and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of thorns and bundles of thistles, the aconite and the briony, the nightshade and the poppy; and at the root of these grew the healing plantain, which, rising up into a tallness, by the friendly invitation of heavenly influence, turned about the tree of the cross, and cured the wounds of the thorns, and the curse of the thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. "If God be thus kind when he is angry, what is he when he feasts us with caresses of his more tender kindness?"¹ All that God restored to us after the forfeiture of Adam, grew to be a double kindness; for it became the expression of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciousness that was not to be altered, though we were; and that was it which we needed. That is the first general: all the bounties of the creation became mercies to us, when God continued them to us, and restored them after they were forfeit.

2. But as a circle begins every where and ends no where, so do the mercies of God; after all this huge progress, now it began anew: 'God is good and gracious,' and 'God is ready to forgive.' Now, that he had once more made us capable of mercies,

¹ Si sic irascitur, quomodo convivatur?

God had what he desired, and what he could rejoice in, something on which he might pour forth his mercies. And, by the way, this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art, when I speak of that which hath no measure,) God made us capable of one sort of his mercies, and we made ourselves capable of another. 'God is good and gracious,' that is, desirous to give great gifts: and of this God made us receptive, first by giving us natural possibilities, that is, by giving those gifts he made us capable of more; and next, by restoring us to his favour, that he might not by our provocations be hindered from raining down his mercies. But God is also 'ready to forgive:' and of this kind of mercy we made ourselves capable, even by not deserving it. Our sin made way for his grace, and our infirmities called on his pity; and because we sinned we became miserable, and because we were miserable we became pitiable; and this opened the other treasure of his mercy, that because our 'sin abounds,' his 'grace may superabound.' In this method we must confine our thoughts:

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|---------------|--|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Giving. | | *Thou, Lord, art good, | | plenteous in mercy to all |
| 2. Forgiving. | | and ready to forgive, | | them that call upon thee. |

3. God's mercies, or the mercies of his giving, came first on us by mending of our nature: for the ignorance we fell into is instructed, and better learned in spiritual notices than Adam's morning knowledge in Paradise; our appetites are made subordinate to the Spirit, and the liberty of our wills is improved, having 'the liberty of the sons of God;' and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage than we lost in Adam: and as man lost Paradise, and got heaven; so he lost the integrity

of the first, and got the perfection of the second Adam: his 'living soul' is changed into 'a quickening spirit;' our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith, and our passions and desires are entertained with hope, and our election is sanctified with charity, and our first life of a temporal possession is passed into a better, a life of spiritual expectations; and, though our first parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life. But I instance in two great things, in which human nature is greatly advanced, and passed on to greater perfections. The first is, that besides body and soul, which was the sum total of Adam's constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life; I mean, the Spirit: so that now man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the old man, that is, the old constitution, is the least part, and in its proper operations is dead, or dying; but the new man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a Christian, and that is renewed in us day by day. But secondly, human nature is so highly exalted and mended by that mercy, which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when he did come, and actuate the purposes of this mission, and ascended up into heaven, he carried human nature above the seats of angels, to the place whither 'Lucifer, the son of the morning,' aspired to ascend, but in his attempt fell into hell. For (so said the prophet) 'the son of the morning said, I will ascend into heaven, and sit in the sides of the north,' that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the east, called the sides or obliquity of the north. And as the seating of his human nature in that glo-

rious seat brought to him all adoration, and the majesty of God, and the greatest of his exaltation; so it was so great an advancement to us, that all the angels of heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition; not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are less than angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equal honour of being fellow-servants. This mystery is plain in Scripture, and the real effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah, the father of Samson, saw an angel, he worshipped him;¹ and, in the Old Testament, it was esteemed lawful; for they were the lieutenants of God, sent with the impresses of his majesty, and took in his name the homage from us, who then were so much their inferiors. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the Lord of all the angels, then they became our fellow-servants, and might not receive worship from any of the servants of Jesus, especially from prophets and martyrs, and those that are ministers of 'the testimony of Jesus.' And therefore when an angel appeared to St. John, and he, according to the custom of the Jews, fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing, or not considering any thing to the contrary; the angel reproved him, saying, 'See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God;'² or, as St. Cyprian³ reads it, "worship Jesus." God and man are now only capable of worship; but no angel: God, essentially; man, in the person of

¹ Judges, xiii.² Rev. xxii. 9.³ De Bono Patientiæ.

Christ, and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer; but angels not so high, and, therefore, not capable of any religious worship. And this dignity of man St. Gregory explicates fully.¹ "Why did the angels of old receive worshippings, and were silent; but, in the New Testament, decline it, and fear to accept it?" The reason is because they, seeing our nature, which they did so lightly value, raised up above them, they fear to see it humbled under them; neither do they any more despise the weakness, which themselves worship in the King of heaven." The same also is the sense of the gloss of St. Ambrose, Ansbertus, Haymo, Rupertus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late: which being so plainly consonant to the words of the angel, and consigned by the testimony of such men, I the rather note, that those who worship angels, and make religious addresses to them, may see what privilege themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in his nature relative to us is 'exalted far above all thrones, and principalities, and dominions.' I need not add lustre to this: it is like the sun, the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams; and there is not in nature, or the advantages of honour, any thing greater, than that we have the issues of that mercy which makes us fellow-servants with angels, too much

¹ "Quid est, quod, ante Redemptoris adventum, adorantur ab hominibus (angeli) et tacent, postmodum vero adorari refugiant? Nisi quod naturam nostram, quam prius despexerant, postquam hanc super se assumptam aspiciunt, prostratam sibi videri pertimescunt; nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere ausi sunt, quam super se, viz. in cœli Rege, venerantur."—Hom. viii. in Evangel.

honoured to pay them a religious worship, whose Lord is a man, and he that is their King, is our Brother.

4. To this, for the likeness of the matter, I add, that the divine mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of his favours, that we are not only fellow-ministers and servants with the angels, and in our nature in the person of Christ exalted above them; but we also shall be their judges. And if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there are in honour no degrees, no priority or distances, or characters of fame and nobleness. Christ is the great Judge of all the world; his human nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits; then shall the devils, those angels that fell from their first originals, be brought in their chains from their dark prisons, and once be allowed to see the light, that light that shall confound them; while all that follow the Lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that resurrection, shall be assessors in the judgment. 'Know ye not,' saith St. Paul, 'that ye shall judge angels?'¹ And Tertulian, speaking concerning devils and accursed spirits, saith, 'Those angels which we renounced in baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lord's glory, in the great day of recompences.'² And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of sentence that condemns the evil angels, shall also reward the good, and increase their glory; which, because they derive from their Lord and ours, from

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 3

² "Hi sunt angeli quos judicaturi sumus, hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus."—De Cult. Fœmin.

their King and our elder Brother, 'the King of Glories,' whose glorious hands shall put the crown on all our heads, we, who shall be servants of that judgment, and some way or other assist in it, have a part of that honour, to be judges of all angels, and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that nature that sits on the throne of God, that reigns over angels, that shall sit in judgment on all the world. It is a great indecency that the son of a king should bear water on his head, and dress vineyards among the slaves; or to see a wise man, and the guide of his country, drink-drunk among the meanest of his servants; but when members of Christ shall be made members of a harlot, and that which rides above a rainbow, stoops to an imperious whorish woman; when the soul that is sister to the Lord of angels, shall degenerate into the foolishness or rage of a beast, being drowned with the blood of the grape, or made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies; we shall but strip ourselves of that robe of honour with which Christ hath invested and adorned our nature, and carry that portion of humanity, which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some capacities above angels, into a portion of an eternal shame, and become less in all senses, and equally disgraced with devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be, that we turned the glories of the Divine mercy into the baseness of ingratitude, and the amazement of suffering the Divine vengeance. But I pass on.

5. The next order of Divine mercies that I shall remark, is also an improvement of our nature, or an appendage to it. For, whereas our constitution

is weak, our souls apt to diminution and impedité faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookedness, to stammering and sorrows, to baldness and deformity, to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness of spirit; God hath, in his infinite mercy, provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness, to make recompense, and sometimes with an overrunning proportion, for those natural defects, which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible, and our conditions intolerable. God gives to blind men better memories. For on this account it is that Ruffinus makes mention of Didymus of Alexandria, who, being blind, was blest with a rare attention and singular memory; and by prayer, and hearing, and meditating, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Mechliniensis, who, being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental blindness, and from thence continually grew to so quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory, that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen rector of the college at Mechlin, and was made licentiate of theology at Louvain, and doctor of both the laws at Cologne, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances: want of children he recompences with freedom from care; and whatsoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as the punishment of the sin of the man, or the instrument of his virtue or his security, and it is reckoned

as a sufficient antidote. God hath laid a severe law on all women, that 'in sorrow they shall bring forth children : ' yet God hath so tempered that sorrow, that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow ; and they have reason to rejoice in that state, the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise, ' that they shall be saved in bearing children.' He that wants one eye, hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him ; and whenever any man is afflicted with sorrow, his reason and his religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil and persons that are obliged, run in to comfort him ; and he may, if he will observe wisely, find so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many designs of Providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage, and certain reserves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affairs it often happens, that a single cross is a double blessing, and that even in a temporal sense ' it is better to go to the house of mourning ' than of joys and festival egressions. Is not the affliction of poverty better than the prosperity of a great and tempting fortune ? Does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and low spirit, retired thoughts, and under a sad roof ? And is it not generally true, that sickness itself is appayed with religion and holy thoughts, with pious resolutions and penitential prayers, with returns to God and to sober counsels ? And if this be true, that God sends sorrow to cure sin, and affliction be the handmaid to grace ; it is also certain that every sad contingency in nature is doubly recompensed with the advantages of religion, besides those intervening refreshments which support the spirit, and refresh its instru-

ments. I shall need to instance but once more in this particular.

God hath sent no greater evil into the world, than that 'in the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread;' and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls, we shall 'work out our salvation.' But see how in the first of these God hath outdone his own anger, and defeated the purposes of his wrath, by the inundation of his mercy: for this labour and sweat of our brows is so far from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. Is it not labour that makes the garlic and the pulse, the sycamore and the cresses, the cheese of the goats and the butter of the sheep, to be savoury and pleasant as the flesh of the roebuck, or the milk of the kine, the marrow of oxen, or the thighs of birds? If it were not for labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble nor so untempted. And as God hath made us beholden to labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing itself owes to labour many degrees of its worth and value. And therefore I need not reckon, that besides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for labour; nights to cure the sweat of the day, sleep to ease our watchfulness, rest to alleviate our burdens, and days of religion to procure our rest: and things are so ordered, that labour is become a duty, and an act of many virtues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of

our rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an inactive life; and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time; which yet passes over the active man light as a dream, or the feathers of a bird, while the disemployed is a disease, and like a long sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his country. And therefore, although, in this particular, God hath been so merciful in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people good and bad, who do not 'eat their bread in the sweat of their brows;' yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the divine mercy: God did more for us than we did absolutely need; for he hath so disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled to it, that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in loving-kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine, and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then, for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spiritual interest with the labours of our spirit, [this] seems to most men to be so intolerable, that, rather than pass under it, they quit their hopes of heaven, and pass into the portion of devils. And what can there be to alleviate this sorrow, that a man shall be perpetually solicited with an impure tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a lust,

and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared temptations ; and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit, and he must not desire what he cannot choose but desire, and he must not enjoy whatsoever he does violently covet, and must never satisfy his appetite in the most violent importunities, but must therefore deny himself, because to do so is extremely troublesome ? This seems to be an art of torture, and a device to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its entire constitution. For, if it were not for this, we had nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men, or no man, must go thither ; for nothing can distinguish man from man, in order to beatitude, but choice and election ; and nothing can ennoble the choice but love, and nothing can exercise love but difficulty, and nothing can make that difficulty but the contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And therefore, whenever any of you are tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulancy of temptation, you may be cured, if you will please but to remember and rejoice, that now you have something of your own to give to God, something that he will be pleased to accept, something that he hath given thee that thou mayest give it him : for our money and our time, our days of feasting and our days of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, our worshippings and protestations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the sum of our religion,

are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty.¹ So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things such as we call virtue and vice, reward and punishment; and if we will not suffer God to distinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter; and his portion shall be blackness without variety, and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of divine mercy, we are to account that, not only in nature, but in contingency and emergent events of Providence, God makes compensation to us for all the evils of chance and hostilities of accident, and brings good out of evil; which is that solemn triumph which mercy makes over justice, when it rides on a cloud, and crowns its darkness with a robe of glorious light. God indeed suffered Joseph to be sold a bond-slave into Egypt, but then it was that God intended to crown and reward his chastity; for by that means he brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention, and he was a conqueror. Then God sent him to prison; but still that was mercy; it was to make way to bring him to Pharaoh's court. And God brought famine on Canaan, and troubled all the souls of Jacob's family; and there was a plot laid for another mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Joseph's glory. And then God brought a great evil on their posterity, and they groaned under

¹ "*Læti*us est quoties magno tibi constat honestum."

taskmasters; but this God changed into the miracles of his mercy, and suffered them to be afflicted that he might do ten miracles for their sakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest treason that ever was committed,—the redemption of the world, from the fact of Judas? God loving to defeat the malice of man and the arts of the devil by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy. It is a sad calamity to see a kingdom spoiled, and a church afflicted; the priests slain with the sword, and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand; religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; government confounded, and laws ashamed; judges decreeing causes in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred, and setting fire on the fields, and turning in ‘little foxes’ on purpose to ‘destroy the vineyards.’ And what shall make recompense for this heap of sorrows, whenever God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which then will be made public, when we shall hear such afflicted people sing, “*In convertendo captivitatem Sion,*” with the voice of joy and festival eucharist, “among such as keep holy-day;” and when peace shall become sweeter, and dwell the longer. And in the mean time it serves religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and God shall crown them, and men shall grow wiser and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take sanctuary in holy living, and be taught temperance by their want, and patience by their suffering, and charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the

duty of their relations; and, at last, the secret worm that lay at the root of the plant, shall be drawn forth and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine-press, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage; but when the lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant, and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted province cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staff, and his anger into mercy.

Had not David suffered more, if he had suffered less? and had he not been miserable, unless he had been afflicted? He understood it well, when he said, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' He that was rival to Crassus when he stood candidate to command the legions in the Parthian war, was much troubled that he missed the dignity; but he saw himself blest that he escaped the death, and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the sad news arrived at Rome. The gentleman at Marseilles cursed his stars, that he was absent when

the ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a wind, and missed it; but he gave thanks to the Providence that blessed him with the cross, when he knew that the ship perished in the voyage, and all the men were drowned. And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem that longed to become glad mothers, and for want of children would not be comforted, yet, when Titus sacked the city, found the words of Jesus true, 'Blessed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck.' And the world being governed with a rare variety, and changes of accidents and providence, that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a blessing bigger than we hoped for, than when we were angry with God for hindering us to perish in pleasant ways, or when he was contriving to pour on thy head a mighty blessing. Do not think the judge condemns you when he chides you; nor think to read thy own final sentence by the first half of his words. Stand still, and see how it will be in the whole event of things: let God speak his mind out; for it may be this sad beginning is but an art to bring in, or to make thee to esteem, and entertain, and understand the blessing.

They that love to talk of the mercies of the Lord, and to recount his good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by such appellatives, which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: he is 'the Father of the fatherless,' and an 'Avenger of the widow's cause;' 'He standeth at the right hand of the poor, to save his soul from unrighteous judges;' and 'He is with us in tribulation.' And on this ground let us account whether mercy be not the greater ingredient in

that death and deprivation, when I lose a man, and get God to be my Father; and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean on him, and becomes my patron and my guide, my advocate and defender. And if in our greatest misery God's mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose him to be in the endearment of his loving kindness? If his evil be so transparent, well may we know that on his face dwells glory, and from his eyes light and perpetual comforts run in channels larger than the returns of the sea, when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course by the violence of a tempest from the north. The sum is this: God intends every accident should minister to virtue, and every virtue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the divine goodness; and, therefore, if our sorrows do not pass into comforts, it is beside God's intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that mercy, which would save us by all means and all varieties, by health and by sickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we choose and by what we fear; that as God's providence rules over all chances of things and all designs of men, so his mercy may rule over all his providence.

PART II.

7. God having, by these means, secured us from the evils of nature and contingences, and represented himself to be our Father, which is the greatest endearment, and tie, and expression of a

natural, unalterable, and essential kindness; he next makes provisions for us to supply all those necessities which himself hath made. For even to make necessities was a great circumstance of his mercy; and all the relishes of wine, and the savouriness of meat, the sweet and the fat, the pleasure and the satisfaction, the restitution of spirits and the strengthening of the heart, are not owing to the liver of the vine or the kidneys of wheat, to the blood of the grape or the strength of the corn, but to the appetite or the necessity; and therefore it is, that he that sits at a full table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of nature's intervals—he loses the blessing of his daily bread, and leans on his table as a sick man on his bed, or the lion in the grass, which he cannot feed on: but he that wants it, and sits down when nature gives the sign, rejoices in the health of his hunger, and the taste of his meat, and the strengthening of his spirit, and gives God thanks, while his bones and his flesh rejoice in the provisions of nature and the blessing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy and the decays of old age the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections on their acts of sense? and 'when desire fails,' presently 'the mourners go about the streets.'¹ But then, that those desires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordinary and extraordinary, by foresight and contingency, according to necessity and up unto convenience, until we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger than the bow in

¹ Eccles. xii.

the clouds, and richer than the trees of Eden, which were permitted to feed our miserable father. Is not all the earth our orchard and our granary, our vineyard and our garden of pleasure? and the face of the sea is our traffic, and the bowels of the sea is our vivarium, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendant needs; and all the face of heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitful showers and fair refreshments. And when God made provision for his other creatures, he gave it of one kind, and with variety no greater than the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or sitting down with his draught of blood, or walking on his portion of grass: but man hath all the food of beasts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food, and the 'food of angels,' and 'the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth;' and every part of his body hath a provision made for it; and the smoothness of the olive and the juice of the vine refresh the heart and make the face cheerful, and serve the ends of joy and the festivity of man; and are not only to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appease a passion, and allay a sorrow. It is an infinite variety of meat, with which God furnishes out the table of mankind. And in the covering our sin, and clothing our nakedness, God passed from fig-leaves to the skins of beasts, from aprons to long robes, from leather to wool, and from thence to the warmth of furs, and the coolness of silks; he hath dressed not only our needs, but hath fitted the several portions of the year, and made us to go dressed like our mother, leaving off the winter-sables when the florid spring appears; and as soon as the tulip fades, we put on the robe of summer, and then shear our

sheep for winter: and God uses us as Joseph did his brother Benjamin; we have many changes of raiment, and our mess is five times bigger than the provision made for our brothers of the creation. But the providence and mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God running over the tables of the rich, God hath also made provisions for the poorest person; so that if they can but rule their desires, they shall have their tables furnished. And this is secured and provided for by one promise and two duties, by our own labour and our brother's charity: and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women of the world provided for, and fed, and clothed, till they die? And was it not always so from the first morning of the creatures? And that a man is starved to death, is a violence and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldom as for a man to have but one eye; and if our being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdom and admire the mercies of our Almighty Father. But these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that God hath made such strange provisions for our health, such infinite differences of plants, and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by mere chance, or by inspiration? either of which is the miracle of Providence, secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of Heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the divine mercy that discovered to man the secrets of spagyric medicines, of stones, of spirits, and the results of seven or eight decoc-

tions, and the strange effects of accidental mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the secret sanctuary of hidden causes and secret natures, and being laid open by the concurrence of twenty or thirty little accidents, all which were ordered by God as certainly as are the first principles of nature, or the descent of sons from the fathers in the most noble families.

But that which I shall observe in this whole affair is, that there are, both for the provision of our tables and the relief of our sicknesses, so many miracles of providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation we bear to heaven: and the poor man need not be troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the sun is up; for he hath found to this day he was not deceived; and then he may rejoice, because he sees, by an effective probation, that in heaven a decree was made, every day to send him provisions of meat and drink. And that is a mighty mercy, when the circles of heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosom of care and nourishment, and the wisdom of God is daily busied to serve his mercy, as his mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there, where the diseases are most popular? and every country is best provided against its own evils. Is not the rhubarb found where the sun most corrupts the liver; and the scabious by the shore of the sea, that God might cure as soon as he wounds? and the inhabitants may see their remedy against the leprosy and the scurvy, before they feel their sickness? And then to this we may add nature's commons and open fields, the shores of rivers and the strand of the sea, the unconfined air,

the wilderness that hath no hedge; and that in these every man may hunt, and fowl, and fish, respectively; and that God sends some miracles and extraordinary blessings so for the public good, that he will not endure they should be enclosed and made several. Thus he is pleased to dispense the manna of Calabria, the medicinal waters of Germany, the muscles at Sluys at this day, and the Egyptian beans in the marshes of Albania, and the salt at Troas of old; which God, to defeat the covetousness of man, and to spread his mercy over the face of the indigent, as the sun scatters his beams over the bosom of the whole earth, did so order, that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosom of heaven was open; but when man gathered them into single handfuls, and made them improper, God gathered his hand into his bosom, and bound the heavens with ribs of brass, and the earth with decrees of iron; and the blessing reverted to him that gave it, since they might not receive it to whom it was sent. And in general, this is the excellency of this mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied and secured by a promise which God cannot break: but he that cannot break the laws of his own promises, can break the laws of nature, that he may perform his promise, and he will do a miracle rather than forsake thee in thy needs: so that our security and the relative mercy is bound on us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God, that he hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if God is so merciful in making fair provisions for our less noble part, in order to the transition towards our country, we may expect that the

mercies of God have rare arts to secure to us his designed bounty in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite mercy of the almighty Father of mercies, that he hath appointed to us such a religion, that leads us to a huge felicity through pleasant ways. For the felicity that is designed to us, is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while we are so ignorant as not to understand it, we are also so foolish as not to desire it with passions great enough to perform the little conditions of its purchase. God, therefore, knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we should be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our salvation on us by the endearment of temporal prosperities; and because we love this world so well, God hath so ordered it, that even this world may secure the other. And of this, God in old times made open profession: for when he had secretly designed to bring his people to a glorious immortality in another world, he told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger than the capacity of their thoughts or of their theology; but told them that which would tempt them most, and endear obedience: 'If you will obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land;' ye shall possess a rich country, ye shall triumph over your enemies, ye shall have numerous families, blessed children, rich granaries, overrunning wine-presses. For God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and

feel, it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whether before they come, they must die, and lose all desire, and all capacities of enjoyment. But this design of God, which was barefaced in the days of the law, is now in the gospel interwoven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of faith and reason) into every virtue; and temporal advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every Christian grace. For so the richest tissue dazzles the beholder's eye, when the sun reflects on the metal, the silver and the gold weaved into fantastic imagery, or a wealthy plainness; but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought on cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies: so is the embroidery of our virtue. The glories of the Spirit dwell on the face and vestment, on the fringes and the borders, and there we see the beryl and the onyx, the jasper and the sardonyx, order and perfection, love, and peace, and joy, mortification of the passions and ravishment of the will, adherences to God and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Ghost, and longings after heaven, humility and chastity, temperance and sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the clothes of the soul, that it may not be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; but through these rich materials a thread of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoice; they are wrought on secular content and material satisfactions; and now we cannot be happy unless we be pious, and the religion of a Christian is the greatest security, and the most certain instrument of making a man

rich, and pleasing, and healthful, and wise, and beloved in the whole world. I shall now remark only two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have elsewhere represented.¹

1. The whole religion of a Christian, as it relates to others, is nothing but justice and mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit: and on this supposition, what evil can come to a just and a merciful, to a necessary and useful person? For the first permission of evil was on the stock of injustice. He that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another man's right, must venture the loss of his own; and when I put my brother to his defence, he may chance drive the evil so far from himself, that it may reach me. Laws and judges, private and public judicatures, wars and tribunals, axes and wheels, were made, not for the righteous, but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useless, if men did do as they would willingly suffer.

2. And because there is no evil that can befall a just man, unless it comes by injury and violence, our religion hath also made as good provisions against that too, as the nature of the thing will suffer. For by patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by hope and faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the mind, the envy and the fretfulness that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man; and when we turn all the passion into charity, and God turns all the suffering into reward, there remains nothing that

¹ Life of Holy Jesus, part iii. disc. 14.

is very formidable. So that our religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men; and in our religion no man can suffer as a malefactor, if he follow the religion truly: and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the graces of this discipline turn them into virtues and rewards, and make them that in their event they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3. But then when we consider that the religion of a Christian consists in doing good to all men; that it is made up of mercies and friendships, of friendly conventions and assemblies of saints; that all are to do good works for necessary uses, that is, to be able to be beneficial to the public, and not to be burdensome to any, where it can be avoided; what can be wished to men in relation to others, and what can be more beneficial to themselves, than that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the public does need, such whom princes and nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their several conditions; that they are so well provided for, that, unless a persecution disables them, they can not only maintain themselves, but oblige others to their charity? This is a temporal good, which all wise men reckon as part of that felicity which recompenses all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbourhood and amity, where men are most valued and most secure.

4. To this we may add this material consideration: that all those graces, which oblige us to do good to others, are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to ourselves. It is a

huge nobleness of charity to give alms, not only to our brother, but for him. It is the Christian sacrifice, like that of Job, who made oblations for his sons when they feasted each other, fearing lest they had sinned against God. And if I give alms, and fast, and pray, in behalf of my prince or my patron, my friend or my children, I do a combination of holy actions, which are, of all things that I can do, the most effectual intercession for him whom I so recommend. But then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the divine mercy, to secure blessing to ourselves. That I am a person fit to intercede and pray for him, must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept; so that, before I be fit to pray and interpose for him, I must first become dear to God; and my charity can do him no good, for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to God, that so he may the rather hear me. And when I fast, it is first an act of repentance for myself, before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my brother a single benefit, by doing myself a double one. And it is also so ordered, that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then he will hear me for myself, though I say nothing in my own behalf: and our prayers are like Jonathan's arrows; if they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for, and I have not only the comfort of rejoicing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy. And certain it is, that the charitable prayer for another can never want what it asks, or, instead of it, a greater bless-

ing. The good man that saw his poor brother troubled because he had nothing to present for an offering at the holy communion, (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindness for Christ's poor members, with which themselves were incorporated with so mysterious a union,) and gave him money that he might present for the good of his soul, as other Christians did, had not only the reward of alms, but of religion too; and that offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two souls. For as I sin when I make another sin, so if I help him to do a good. I am sharer in the gains of that talent; and he shall not have the less, but I shall be rewarded on his stock. And this was it which David rejoiced in: 'I am a partner, a companion, of all them that fear thee;' I share in their profits. If I do but rejoice at every grace of God which I see in my brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace. And we need not envy the excellency of another: it becomes mine as well as his; and if I do rejoice, I shall have cause to rejoice. So excellent, so full, so artificial is the mercy of God, in making, and seeking, and finding all occasions to do us good.

5. The very charity, and love, and mercy that is commanded in our religion, is in itself a great excellency, not only in order to heaven, but to the comforts of the earth too, and such without which a man is not capable of a blessing or a comfort. And he that sent charity and friendships into the world, intended charity to be as relative as justice, and to do its effect both on the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a blessing to a kind father, when his children do well, and every

degree of prudent love which he bears to them is an endearment of his joy ; and he that loves them not, but looks on them as burdens of necessity and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoicings, and the pleasures of kindness which they feast withal, who love to divide their fortunes amongst them, because they have already divided large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in this relation ; but it is true in all the excellency of friendship ; and every man rejoices twice, when he hath a partner of his joy. A friend shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety ; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two channels divide the river, and lessen it into rivulets, and make it fordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Syrian star ; but two torches do not divide, but increase the flame. And though my tears are the sooner dried up when they run on my friend's cheeks in the furrows of compassion ; yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories, and make them radiant, like the golden candlesticks that burn before the throne of God ; because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now, on this account, which is already so great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral issues and little streams of comfort, which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us ; such as are mutual comforts, visiting sick people, instructing the ignorant, and so becoming better instructed, and fortified, and comforted ourselves, by the instruments of our brother's ease and advantages ;—the glories of converting souls, of rescuing a sinner from hell, of a miserable man from the grave ;—the honour and no-

bleness of being a good man;—the noble confidence and the bravery of innocence;—the ease of patience, the quiet of contentedness, the rest of peacefulness, the worthiness of forgiving others, the greatness of spirit that is in despising riches, and the sweetness of spirit that is in meekness and humility:—these are Christian graces in every sense; favours of God, and issues of his bounty and his mercy. But all that I shall now observe further concerning them is this: that God hath made these necessary; he hath obliged us to have them, under pain of damnation; he hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world, that if we will not, he hath threatened to destroy us; which is not a desire or aptness to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it, that we cannot perish, unless we desire it ourselves; and unless we will do ourselves a mischief on purpose to get hell, we are secured of heaven: and there is not in the nature of things any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity on creatures that can choose, than to make that which they should naturally choose, be spiritually their duty; and then he will make them happy hereafter, if they will suffer him to make them happy here. But hard by stand another throng of mercies, that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them; for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this felicity.

9. God, that he might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chains, and bound us, not only with the bracelets of love and the deliciousness of hope, but with the ruder cords of fear and reverence; even

with all the innumerable parts of a restraining grace. For it is a huge aggravation of human calamity to consider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of his religion, and knows it to be the way of honour and felicity, and that to prevaricate his holy sanctions is certain death and disgrace to eternal ages ; yet that some men shall despise their religion, others shall be very wary of its laws, and call the commandments a burden ; and too many, with a perfect choice, shall delight in death, and the ways that lead thither ; and they choose money infinitely, and to rule over their brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong, and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they desire, and love it fondly, and be restless in all things but where they perish. If God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous and merciful grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the deluge of sin universally, as the old world did in that storm of the divine anger, the flood of waters. But thus God suffers but few adulterers in the world, in respect of what would be, if all men that desire to be adulterers, had power and opportunity. And yet some men, and very many women, are, by modesty and natural shamefacedness, chastised in their too forward appetites ; or the laws of man, or public reputation, or the indecency and unhand-some circumstances of sin, check the desire, and make it that it cannot arrive at act. For so have I seen a busy flame sitting on a sullen coal, turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbourhood, and reach at a heap of prepared

straw, which, like a bold temptation, called it to a restless motion and activity; but either it was at too big a distance, or a gentle breath from heaven diverted the sphere and the ray of the fire to the other side, and so prevented the violence of the burning, till the flame expired in a weak consumption, and died, turning into smoke, and the coolness of death, and the harmlessness of a cinder. And when a man's desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and pass on in a smooth channel of opportunity, God oftentimes hinders the lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port, and entering into action, by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a sudden disability, by unreasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very weariness of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the desire, bursting itself with its fulness into dissolution and a remiss easiness, by a sentence of Scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interventions of the Spirit of grace, chastising the crime, and representing its appendant mischiefs, and its constituent disorder and irregularity; and after all this, the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose, hath rolled itself into so much uneasiness and unquiet reflections, that the man is grown ashamed, and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not less than infinite, in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbourhood and temptation. For if the hyena and a dog should be thrust into the same kennel, one of them would soon find a grave, and, it may be, both of them their death. So infallible

is the ruin of most men, if they be showed a temptation. Nitre and resin, naphtha and bitumen, sulphur and pitch, are their constitution; and the fire passes on them infinitely, and there is none to secure them. But God, 'by removing our sins far from us, as far as the east is from the west,' not only putting away the guilt, but setting the occasion far from us—extremely far—so far that sometimes we cannot sin, and many times not easily—hath magnified his mercy, by giving us safety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses, if I should consider concerning the variety of God's grace; his preventing and accompanying, his inviting and corroborating grace; his assisting us to will, his enabling us to do; his sending angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company, to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make it by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with virtue, because they have mingled that virtue with a just and a fair interest; to some men, by making religion that thing they live on; to others, the means of their reputation and the securities of their honour; and thousands of ways more, which every prudent man that watches the ways of God, cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of mercy; for he that is to pass through an infinite, must not dwell on every little line of life.

10. The next order of mercies is of so pure and unmingled constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and dispositions of the receivers; and afterwards, when it hath, it relates

only to such conditions, which itself creates and produces in the susceptible; I mean, the mercies of the Divine predestination. For was it not an infinite mercy, that God should predestinate all mankind to salvation by Jesus Christ, even when he had no other reason to move him to do it, but because man was miserable, and needed his pity? But I shall instance only in the intermedial part of this mysterious mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of Christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish priest? What distinguished me from another, that my father was sincere in his discipline, and careful to 'bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;' and I was not exposed to the carelessness of an irreligious guardian, and taught to steal and lie, and to make sport with my infant vices and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying chrysome, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience? What had you done of good, or towards it, that you were not condemned to that stupid ignorance, which makes the souls of most men to be little higher than beasts, and who understand nothing of religion and noble principles, of parables and wise sayings of old men? And not only in our cradles, but in our schools and our colleges, in our friendships and in our marriages, in our enmities and in all our conversation, in our virtues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferior, there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differences. Or it may be, my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he killed a man; but God did

not suffer me to do so : he fell down and died with a little disorder ; I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins : he did amiss once, and was surprised in that disadvantage ; I sin daily, and am still invited to repentance : he would fain have lived and amended ; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the angel of his wrath to execute his anger on a sinful people, we are encompassed with funerals, and yet the angel hath not smitten us. What or who makes the difference ? We shall then see, when, in the separations of eternity, we sitting in glory shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roaring in the seats of the reprobate ; we shall then perceive that it is even that mercy which hath no cause but itself, no measure of its emanation but our misery, no natural limit but eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an essential and an unalterable goodness, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

11. Lastly, all the mercies of God are concentrated in that which is all the felicity of man ; and God is so great a lover of souls, that he provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations and weak discoursings. The particulars I shall remark are these : 1. God's mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies of men ; so that in the conventions and assemblies of heretics (as the word is usually understood, for erring and mistaken people,) although their doctrines are

such, that, if men should live according to their proper and natural consequences, they would live impiously, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but truth while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, that, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory. He that believes contrition alone, with confession to a priest, is enough to expiate ten thousand sins, is furnished with an excuse easy enough to quit himself from the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap ways of buying off his penances for a little money, even for the greatest sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act for which he must repent; since repentance is a duty so soon, so certainly, and so easily performed. But these are notorious doctrines of the Roman church; and yet God so loves the souls of his creatures, that many men who trust to these doctrines in their discourses, dare not rely on them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly as if they did not believe so foolishly. He that tells that, antecedently, God hath, to all human choice, decreed men to heaven or to hell, takes away from men all care of the way, because they believe that he that infallibly decreed that end, hath unalterably appointed the means; and some men that talk thus wildly, live soberly, and are overwrought in their understanding by some secret art of God, that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be assisted in his choice, and saved by the Divine mercies. And there is no sect of men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses

to cure the venom of their doctrine; and therefore, although the adherent and constituent poison is notorious, and therefore to be declined, yet, because it is collaterally cured and overpowered by the torrent and wisdom of God's mercies, the men are to be taken into the quire, that we may all join in giving God praise for the operation of his hands.—2. I said formerly, that there are many secret and undiscerned mercies by which men live, and of which men can give no account, till they come to give God thanks at their publication; and of this sort is that mercy which God reserves for the souls of many millions of men and women, concerning whom we have no hopes, if we account concerning them by the usual proportions of revelation and Christian commandments; and yet we are taught to hope some strange good things concerning them, by the analogy and general rules of the Divine mercy. For what shall become of ignorant Christians, people that live in wildernesses and places more desert than a primitive hermitage? people that are baptised, and taught to go to church, it may be, once a year? people that can get no more knowledge; they know not where to have it, nor how to desire it? And yet that an eternity of pains shall be consequent to such an ignorance, is unlike the mercy of God; and yet that they should be in any disposition towards an eternity of intellectual joys, is no where set down in the leaves of revelation. And when the Jews grew rebellious, or a silly woman of the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and sinned, and punished with death, we usually talk as if that death passed on to a worse; but yet we may

arrest our thoughts on the Divine mercies, and consider that it is reasonable to expect from the Divine goodness, that no greater forfeiture be taken on a law than was expressed in its sanction and publication. He that makes a law, and binds it with the penalty of stripes, we say, he intends not to afflict the disobedient with scorpions and axes; and it had been hugely necessary that God had scared the Jews from their sins by threatening the pains of hell to them that disobeyed, if he intended to inflict it; for although many men would have ventured the future, since they are not affrighted with the present and visible evil, yet some persons would have had more philosophical and spiritual apprehensions than others, and have been infallibly cured, in all their temptations, with the fear of an eternal pain; and however, whether they had or no, yet since it cannot be understood how it consists with the Divine justice to exact a pain bigger than he threatened, greater than he gave warning of, we are sure it is a great way off from God's mercy to do so. He that usually imposes less, and is loath to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an eternal punishment, when the most that he threatened and gave notice of was but a temporal. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this: that we may publicly worship this mercy of God, which is kept in secret, and that we be not too forward in sentencing all heathens, and prevaricating Jews, to the eternal pains of hell; but to hope that they have a portion in the secrets of the Divine mercy, where also, unless many of us have some little portions depo-

sited, our condition will be very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accursed a thing it is to perish in the eternal flames of hell, and therefore he is not easy to inflict it; and if the joys of heaven be too great to be expected on too easy terms, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to pass lightly on persons who cannot help themselves, and who, if they were helped with clearer revelations, would have avoided them. But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the Divine economy, being sure, whether it be so or no, it is most just, even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the Divine mercy made public, in unexpected instances, at the great day of manifestation. And, indeed, our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely and carelessly, without prayers, without sacraments, without consideration, without counsel, and without comfort; and to dress the souls of our dear people at so sad a parting, is an employment we therefore omit, not always because we are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allays the affections of the world with those melancholic circumstances; but if God did not in his mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for them, and take care of his redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a sad eternity, and without remedy weep together, and groan for ever. But 'God hath provided better things for them, that they, without us, that is without our assistances, 'shall be made perfect.'

PART III.

THERE are very many more orders and conjugations of mercies; but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatness, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a few more, and them also without order: for that they do descend on us, we see and feel; but by what order of things or causes, is as undiscerned as the head of Nilus, or a sudden remembrance of long-neglected and forgotten proposition.

1. But on this account it is that good men have observed, that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living, and does so certainly minister to religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world and the influences of heaven, are taught to serve the ends of the Spirit of God and the spirit of a man. I do not speak of the miracles that God hath, in the several periods of the world, wrought for the establishing his laws, and confirming his promises, and securing our obedience; though that was, all the way, the overflowings and miracles of mercy, as well as power: but that which I consider is, that besides the extraordinary emanations of the Divine power on the first and most solemn occasions of an institution, and the first beginnings of a religion, (such as were the wonders God did in Egypt and in the wilderness, preparatory to the sanction of that law and the first covenant, and the miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles, for the founding and the building up the religion of the gospel and the new covenant,) God does also do things wonderful and miraculous, for the promoting the ordinary and less solemn actions

of our piety, and to assist and accompany them in a constant and regular succession. It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that manna should stink in twenty-four hours, if gathered on Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till forty-eight hours, if gathered on the even of the sabbath; and that it should last many hundred years, when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high-priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion: and manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is every where and no where, filling all things and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one omer, and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince. And not only is it thus in nature, but in contingencies and acts depending on the choice of men; for God having commanded the sons of Israel to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice every year, and to leave their borders to be guarded by women and children and sick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spiteful enemies, yet God so disposed of their hearts and opportunities, that they never entered the land when the people were at their solemnity, until they desecrated their rites, by doing at their passover the greatest sin and treason in the world. Till at Easter they crucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders; but when they had destroyed religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the city at the feast of Easter,

that the more might perish in the deluge of the Divine indignation.

To this observation the Jews add, that in Jerusalem no man ever had a fall that came thither to worship; that at their solemn festivals, there was reception in the town for all the inhabitants of the land; concerning which, although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person, among all the tribes of Israel, was ever a beggar, but all the variety of human chances was overruled to the purposes of providence, and providence was measured by the ends of the religion, and the religion which promised them plenty performed the promise, till the nation and the religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better ministry, and a more excellent dispensation of the things of the world.

But when the Christian religion was planted, and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now 'angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord;' and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to co-operate, as with a united design, to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution, is made rich by religion; and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things; and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because

itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is, that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficient, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen and all rare contingencies,—every thing of chance and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire and great interest is, by all means, to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to religion, to the good of the catholic church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooses.

2. But that which is next to this, and not much unlike the design of this wonderful mercy, is, that all the actions of religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing, and sometimes of contradictory relations, are so concentrated in God their proper centre, and conducted in such certain and pure channels of reason and rule, that no one duty does contradict another; and it can never be necessary for any man, in any case, to sin. They that bound themselves by an oath to kill Paul, were not environed with the sad necessities of murder on one side, and vow-breach on the other, so that if they

did murder him they were man-slayers, if they did not they were perjured ; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawful oath should pass an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawful confederation against his prince, is not girded with a fatal necessity of breach of trust on one side, or breach of allegiance on the other ; for in this also God hath secured the case of conscience, by forbidding any man to make an unlawful promise ; and, on a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it in case he hath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because ‘ whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.’ But yet God’s mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandment, nor against his conscience ; for he is bound to lay aside his error, and be better instructed ; till when, the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence on his understanding, not in the omission of the fact. ‘ No man can serve two masters,’ but therefore ‘ he must hate the one, and cleave to the other.’ But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in sin, and that the great long-suffering of God is expressed in this, that God ‘ suffered the contradiction of sinners,’ we shall feel the mercy of God in the peace of our consciences and the unity of religion, so long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a covetous man, that he is the further off from fulness by having great heaps and vast revenues ; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it ; and that the more he shall need to be satisfied, the less he shall dare to do it ; and that he shall refuse to drink because

he is dry ; that he dies if he tastes, and languishes if he does not ; and at the same time he is full and empty, bursting with a plethory and consumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oil and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian sands. But then the contradiction is multiplied, and the labyrinths more amazed, when prodigality waits on another curse, and covetousness heaps up, that prodigality may scatter abroad ; then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two devils to serve of contradictory designs, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably than the Egyptian task-masters ; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things ; but they begin where they should end, and begin again, and never pass forth to content, or reason, or quietness, or possession. But the duty of a Christian is easy in a persecution, it is clear under a tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresy, it is one in the midst of schism, it is determined amongst infinite disputes ; being like a rock in the sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more. So is our duty, uniform and constant, open and notorious, variously represented but in the same manner exacted ; and in the interest of our souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty, or the variety of any thing that can change ; and it is, by the grace and mercy of God, put into the power of every Christian to do that which God, through Jesus Christ, will accept to salvation ; and

neither men nor devils shall hinder it, unless we list ourselves.

3. After all this, we may sit down and reckon by great sums and conjugations of his gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the divine mercies. God hath given his laws to rule us, his word to instruct us, his Spirit to guide us, his angels to protect us, his ministers to exhort us: he revealed all our duty, and he hath concealed whatsoever can hinder us; he hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming; he hath exercised our faith by keeping private the state of souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our faith by a promise of a resurrection, and entertained our hope by some general significations of the state of interval. His mercies make contemptible means instrumental to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases. He impedes the devil's rage, and infatuates his counsels; he diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes; he binds him in the chain of darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; he suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a child; he hath given him mighty power, and yet a young maiden that resists him, shall make him flee away; he hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve articles of his creed; he gave him power over the winds, and made him prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea; and he hath so restrained him, that, except it be by faith, we know not whether there be any devil, yea or no; for we never heard his noises, nor have seen his

affrighting shapes. This is that great principle of all the felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means. He hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary, and all mutual helpers; and by some instruments, and in some respects, they are all equal in order to felicity, to content, and final and intermedial satisfactions. He gave us part of our reward in hand, that he might enable us to work for more; he taught the world arts for use, arts for entertainment of all our faculties and all our dispositions: he gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want for asking, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refusing to be happy. This is that glorious attribute that hath made order and health, harmony and hope, restitutions and variety, the joys of direct possession, and the joys, the artificial joys, of contrariety and comparison. He comforts the poor, and he brings down the rich, that they may be safe, in their humility and sorrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and uninstructed prosperity. He gives necessities to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so, that every nation may traffic in charity, and commute for pleasures. He was the Lord of Hosts, and he is still what he was; but he loves to be called the God of Peace, because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of heaven. His mercy is the light of the creation, and it fills all the earth; and his mercy is a sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the deep: it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our fears,

and in all the evils that we suffer. His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel: for all the world in the abyss of the divine mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers; and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnify this mercy for ever and ever, that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all felicity.

1. And yet this is but the one half. The mercies of giving I have now told of; but those of forgiving are greater, though not more: 'He is ready to forgive.' And on this stock thrives the interest of our great hope, the hope of a blessed immortality. For if the mercies of giving have not made our expectations big enough to entertain the confidences of heaven; yet when we think of the graciousness and readiness of forgiving, we may with more readiness hope to escape hell, and then we cannot but be blessed by an eternal consequence. We have but small opinion of the divine mercy, if we dare not believe concerning it, that it is desirous, and able, and watchful, and passionate, to keep us, or rescue us respectively from such a condemnation, the pain of which is insupportable, and the duration is eternal, and the extension is misery on all our faculties, and the intention is great beyond patience, or natural or supernatural abilities, and the

state is a state of darkness and despair, of confusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit and gnashing of teeth, misery universal, perfect, and irremediable. From this it is which God's mercies would so fain preserve us. This is a state that God provides for his enemies, not for them that love him; that endeavour to obey, though they do it but in weakness; that weep truly for their sins, though but with a shower no bigger than the drops of pity; that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter than a poor man's candle, though their strengths are no greater than a contrite reed or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth than the smoke of kindling flax. If our faith be pure, and our love unfeigned, if the degrees of it be great, God will accept it into glory; if it be little, he will accept it into grace and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of God's readiness to forgive: he will, on any terms that are not unreasonable, and that do not suppose a remanent affection to sin, keep us from the intolerable pains of hell. And, indeed, if we consider the constitution of the conditions which God requires, we shall soon perceive God intends heaven to us as a mere gift, and that the duties on our part are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections and our love, that the devil might not seize on that portion which to eternal ages shall be the instrument of our happiness. For, in all the parts of our duty, it may be, there is but one instance in which we are to do violence to our natural and first desires. For those men have very ill natures, to whom virtue is so contrary that they are inclined naturally to lust, to drunkenness and anger, to pride and

covetousness, to unthankfulness and disobedience. Most men that are tempted with lust, could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels, as of temperance, and justice, or religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of lust; and persons that are greedy of money, are not fond of amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the wine; and one vice destroys another; and when one vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment and dereliction of the man, unless where vices have cognation and seem but like several degrees of one another. And it is evil custom and superinduced habits that make artificial appetites in most men to most sins; but many times their natural temper vexes them into uneasy dispositions, and aptnesses only to some one unhandsome sort of action. That one thing, therefore, is it, in which God demands of thee mortification and self-denial.

Certain it is, there are very many men in the world, that would fain commute their severity in all other instances for a license in their one appetite; they would not refuse long prayers after a drunken meeting, or great alms together with one great lust. But then consider how easy it is for them to go heaven. God demands of them, for his sake and their own, to crucify but one natural lust, or one evil habit, (for all the rest they are easy enough to do themselves,) and God will give them heaven, where the joy is more than one. And I said, it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for, if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any less evil, to which the temptation is trifling, should in-

terpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy; and our little and inferior appetites, that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences than by direct violence, must not dwell with him who hath crossed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance. Since, therefore, this is the state of most men, and God in effect demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that will give them all good things; it gives demonstration of his huge easiness to redeem us from that intolerable evil, that is equally consequent to the indulging to one or to twenty sinful habits.

2. God's readiness to pardon appears in this, that he pardons before we ask; for he that bids us ask for pardon, hath in design and purpose done the thing already: for, what is wanting on his part, in whose only power it is to give pardon, and in whose desire it is that we should be pardoned, and who commands us to lay hold on the offer? He hath done all that belongs to God, that is, all that concerns the pardon; there it lies ready, it is recorded in the book of life, it wants nothing but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consign and pass the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair or sin.

3. Nay, God is so ready in his mercy, that he did pardon us even before he redeemed us. For, what is the secret of the mystery, that the eternal Son of God should take on him our nature, and die our death, and suffer for our sins, and do our work, and enable us to do our own? He that did this, is God; he who 'thought it no robbery to be

equal with God,' he came to satisfy himself, to pay to himself the price for his own creature. And when he did this for us that he might pardon us, was he at that instant angry with us? Was this an effect of his anger or of his love, that God sent his Son to work our pardon and salvation? Indeed, we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life; but he was reconciled to us so far as that he then did the greatest thing in the world for us: for nothing could be greater than that God, the Son of God, should die for us. Here was reconciliation before pardon: and God, that came to die for us, did love us first before he came. This was hasty love. But it went further yet.

4. God pardoned us before we sinned; and when he foresaw our sin, even mine and yours, he sent his Son to die for us: our pardon was wrought and effected by Christ's death above 1600 years ago; and for the sins of to-morrow, and the infirmities of the next day, Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead, and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not only a favour to us who were born in the due time of the gospel, but to all mankind since Adam; for God, who is infinitely patient in his justice, was not at all patient in his mercy; he forbears to strike and punish us, but he would not forbear to provide cure for us and remedy. For, as if God could not stay from redeeming us, he promised the Redeemer to Adam in the beginning of the world's sin; and Christ was 'the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;' and the covenant of the gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to his part, as to the ministration of pardon; the seed of the woman was set up

against the dragon as soon as ever the tempter had won his first battle; and though God laid his hand, and drew a veil of types and secrecy before the manifestation of his mercies, yet he did the work of redemption, and saved us by the covenant of faith, and the righteousness of believing, and the mercies of repentance, the graces of pardon, and the blood of the slain Lamb, even from the fall of Adam to this very day, and will do till Christ's second coming.

Adam fell by his folly, and did not perform the covenant of one little work, a work of a single abstinence; but he was restored by faith in the seed of the woman. And of this righteousness Noah was a preacher: and 'by faith Enoch was translated,' and by faith a remnant was saved at the flood; and to 'Abraham this was imputed for righteousness,' and to all the patriarchs, and to all the righteous judges, and holy prophets, and saints of the Old Testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their covenant were expressed) to the law of works: their pardon was sealed and kept within the veil, within the curtains of the sanctuary; and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since. And this was a great excellency of the Divine mercy unto them. God had mercy on all mankind before Christ's manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their covenant; and they were saved as we are, by 'the seed of the woman,' by 'God incarnate,' by 'the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:' not by works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact obedience, but by faith working by love; by sincere, hearty endeavours, and believing God, and

relying on his infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy, Jesus Christ. So that here is pardon before we asked it, pardon before Christ's coming, pardon before redemption, and pardon before we sinned. What greater readiness to forgive us can be imagined? Yes, there is one degree more yet, and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5. For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more pardon: he pardons us 'by turning every one of us away from our iniquities.' That is the purpose of Christ; that he might safely pardon us before we sinned, and we might not sin on the confidence of pardon. He pardoned us not only on condition we would sin no more, but he took away our sin, cured our cursed inclinations, instructed our understanding, rectified our will, fortified us against temptation; and now every man whom he pardons, he also sanctifies, and he is born of God, and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains with him, so long as his pardon continues. This is the consummation of pardon. For if God had so pardoned us, as only to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a Redeemer for every month, and new pardons perpetually. But our blessed Redeemer hath taken away our sin, not only the guilt of our old, but our inclinations to new sins: he makes us like himself, and commands us to live so, that we shall not need a second pardon, that is, a second state of pardon: for we are but once baptized into Christ's death, and that death was but one, and our redemption but one, and our covenant

the same ; and as long as we continue within the covenant, we are still within the power and comprehensions of the first pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the Spirit ; yet we resist him, and we grieve him, and we go off from the holiness of the covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed ; and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the holy ' Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith ' and pardon, sits in heaven in a perpetual advocacy for us, that this pardon, once wrought, may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumor of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and on every true and sincere return of a hearty repentance. And now on this title no more degrees can be added : it is already greater, and was before all our needs, than the old covenant, and beyond the revelations, and did in Adam's youth antedate the gospel, turning the public miseries by secret grace into eternal glories. But now on other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and swells like an hydropic cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosom of heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showers to water and refresh the earth.

7. God is so ready to forgive, that himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must, in some degree, pardon us before we are capable of pardon, by his grace making way for his mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unless

God, by his preventing grace, should first work the first part of our pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, we could not desire a pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it. This giving of preventing grace is a mercy of forgiveness contrary to that severity, by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sense; that is, a leaving of men to themselves, so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so plenteously, and the Son of God purchased so dearly for us. When God sends a plague of war on a land, in all the accounts of religion and expectations of reason the way to obtain our peace is, to leave our sins for which the war was sent on us, as the messenger of wrath; and without this, we are like to perish in the judgment. But then consider what a sad condition we are in: war mends but few, but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine, and authorizes murder; and these crimes must be ministered to by their lesser relatives, by covetousness, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder liberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, such cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the sin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed? How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sickness, and our antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of God's preventing grace; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to ascertain us we shall have it: but unless God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, we see there is no

help in us, nor for us. If we be not smitten, we are undone; if we are smitten, we perish: and, as young Demarchus said of his love, when he was made master of his wish, we may say of some of God's judgments, "We perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten; and if they be, then we are worse undone;"¹ because we grow worse for being miserable, but we can be relieved only by a free mercy. For pardon is the way to pardon; and when God gives us our penny, then we can work for another; and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that we can do towards it is but to take it in God's method. And this must needs be a great forwardness of forgiveness, when God's mercy gives the pardon, and the way to find it, and the hand to receive it, and the eye to search it, and the heart to desire it; being busy and effective as Elijah's fire, which, intending to convert the sacrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances, stood in the neighbourhood of the fuel, and called forth its enemies, and licked up the hindering moisture, and the water of the trenches, and made the altar send forth a fantastic smoke before the sacrifice was enkindled. So is the preventing grace of God: it does all the work of our souls, and makes its own way, and invites itself, and prepares its own lodging, and makes its own entertainment; it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our desires; it provokes us to pray, and sanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the desire valid, and

¹ "Salvus sum, quia pereo; si non peream, plane inteream."

the desire does make the act certain and persevering; and both of them are the works of God. For more is received into the soul from without the soul, than does proceed from within the soul: it is more for the soul to be moved and disposed, than to work when that is done; as the passage from death to life is greater than from life to action, especially since the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of God's forwardness and readiness to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient, but God's own words describing mercy in all those dimensions which can signify to us its greatness and infinity. His mercy 'is great,' his mercies 'are many,' his mercy 'reacheth unto the heavens,' it 'fills heaven and earth,' it is 'above all his works,' 'it endureth for ever.' 'God pitieth us as a father doth his children;' nay, he is 'our Father,' and the same also is 'the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;' so that mercy and we have the same relation: and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man only God shows the mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away his mercy, man shall be no more—no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition or his person. But as God preserves man by his mercy, so his mercy hath all its operations on man, and returns to its own centre and incircumscription and infinity, unless it issues forth on us. And therefore, besides the former great lines of the mercy of forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce, and tell its links, is to open a cabinet of jewels, where every stone is as bright as

a star, and every star is great as the sun, and shines for ever, unless we shut our eyes, or draw the veil of obstinate and final sins.

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before he be angry; and yet 'God is provoked every day' by the obstinacy of the Jews, and the folly of the heathens, and the rudeness and infidelity of the Mahometans, and the negligence and vices of Christians; and he 'that can behold no impurity,' is received in all places with perfumes of mushrooms, and 'garments spotted with the flesh,' and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil conscience, and with accursed sins that he hates, on pretence of religion which he loves: and he is made a party against himself by our voluntary mistakes; and men continue ten years, and twenty, and thirty, and fifty, in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God forbears to kill them, and to consign them over to an eternity of horrid pains, still expecting they should repent and be saved.

2. Besides this long-sufferance and forbearing with an unwearied patience, God also excuses a sinner oftentimes, and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move him to intermedial favours first, and from thence to a final pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with a huge easiness to pardon, if he be entreated and reconciled by the effective repentance of a vigorous manhood. He takes ignorance for an excuse; and in every degree of its being inevitable or innocent in its proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. 'But I found mercy of the Lord, because

did it in ignorance,' saith St. Paul. He pities our infirmities, and strikes off much of the account on that stock: the violence of a temptation and restlessness of its motion, the perpetuity of its solicitation, the weariness of a man's spirit, the state of sickness, the necessity of secular affairs, the public customs of a people, have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards some degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives himself forced to strike, yet then he takes off his hand, and repents him of the evil: it is as if it were against him, that any of his creatures should fall under the strokes of an exterminating fury.

4. When he is forced to proceed, he yet makes an end before he hath half done; and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to strike less, as if he himself had the deliverance, and not we. When Ahab had but humbled himself at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the message to the prophet himself, saying, 'Seest thou not how Ahab humbles himself?' What was the event of it? 'I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days the evil shall come on his house.'

5. God forgets our sin, and puts it out of his remembrance; that is, he makes it as though it had never been, he makes penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory: the memory of the sins shall not be on record, to be used to any after-act of disadvantage, and never shall return, unless we force them out of their secret places by ingratitude and a new state of sinning.

6. God sometimes gives pardon beyond all his revelations and declared will, and provides suppletories of repentances, even then when he cuts a man off from the time of repentance, accepting a temporal death instead of an eternal; that although the Divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in some cases, and to some persons, the death and the very cutting off shall go no further, but be instead of explicit and long repentances. Thus it happened to Uzzah, who was smitten for his zeal, and died in severity for prevaricating the letter, by earnestness of spirit to serve the whole religion. Thus it was also in the case of the Corinthians, that died a temporal death for their indecent circumstances in receiving the holy sacrament: St. Paul, who used it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no further, nor pressed the argument to a sadder issue, than to die temporally.

But these suppletories are but seldom, and they are also great troubles, and ever without comfort, and dispensed irregularly, and that not in the case of habitual sins, that we know of, or very great sins, but in single actions, or instances of a less malignity; and they are not to be relied on, because there is no rule concerning them; but when they do happen, they magnify the infiniteness of God's mercy, which is commensurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of his own revelations.

7. God pardons the greatest sinners, and hath left them on record; and there is no instance in the Scripture of the Divine forgiveness, but in such instances, the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak aloud the glories of God's mercies, and

gentleness, and readiness to forgive. Such were St. Paul, a persecutor,—and St. Peter, that forswore his Master,—Mary Magdalene, with seven devils,—the thief on the cross,—Manasses, an idolater,—David, a murderer and adulterer,—the Corinthian, for incest,—the children of Israel, for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and infidelity, and rebellion, and schism, and a golden calf, and open disobedience! And above all, I shall instance in the Pharisees among the Jews, who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, as our blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, namely, in saying that the Spirit of God, by which Christ did work, was an evil spirit; and afterward they crucified Christ; so that two of the persons of the most holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off; yet forty years' time, after all this, was left for their repentance, and they were called on by arguments more persuasive and more excellent in that forty years, than all the nation had heard from their prophets, even from Samuel to Zecharias. And Jonah thought he had reason on his side to refuse to go to threaten Nineveh: he knew God's tenderness in destroying his creatures, and that he should be thought to be but a false prophet; and so it came to pass according to his belief. 'Jonah prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled; for I knew thou wert a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.'¹ He told

¹ Jonah, iv. 2.

beforehand what the event would be, and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Israel, and made it to be his name: 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,'¹ &c.

You see the largeness of this treasure: but we can see no end, for we have not yet looked on the rare arts of conversion; nor that God leaves the natural habit of virtues, even after the acceptance is interrupted; nor his working extra-regular miracles, besides the sufficiency of Moses, and the prophets, and the New Testament; and thousands more, which we cannot consider now.

But this we can: when God sent an angel to pour plagues on the earth, there were in their hands 'golden phials:' for the death of men is precious and costly, and it is an expense that God delights not in: but they were phials; that is, such vessels as out of them no great evil could come at once; but it comes out with difficulty, sobbing and troubled as it passes forth; it comes through a narrow neck, and the parts of it crowd at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each other's neighbourhood, and all strive to get out, but few can pass; as if God did nothing but threaten, and draw his judgments to the mouth of the phial with a full body, and there made it stop itself.

The result of this consideration is, that as we fear the divine judgments, so we adore and love his goodness, and let the golden chains of the divine mercy tie us to a noble prosecution of our duty and the interest of religion. For he is the worst of men whom kindness cannot soften, nor endearment

¹ Exod. xxxiv. 6.

oblige, whom gratitude cannot tie faster than the bands of life and death. He is an ill-natured sinner, if he will not comply with the sweetnesses of heaven, and be civil to his angel-guardian, or observant of his patron God, who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly than a nurse, more diligently than a client, who hath greater care of him than his father, and whose bowels yearn over him with more compassion than a mother; who is bountiful beyond our need, and merciful beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. Fear is stronger than death, and love is more prevalent than fear, and kindness is the greatest endearment of love; and yet to an ingenuous person, gratitude is greater than all these, and obliges to a solemn duty, when love fails, and fear is dull and inactive, and death itself is despised. But the man who is hardened against kindness, and whose duty is not made alive with gratitude, must be used like a slave, and driven like an ox, and enticed with goads and whips; but must never enter into the inheritance of sons. Let us take heed; for mercy is like a rainbow, which God set in the clouds to remember mankind: it shines here as long as it is not hindered; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it shines not in the other world. If we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.

SERMON II.

WHITSUNDAY.—OF THE SPIRIT OF GRACE.

ROMANS, VIII. 9, 10.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.

PART I.

THIS day, in which the church commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, was the first beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the religion was professed: now the apostles first opened their commission, and read it to all the people. 'The Lord gave *his Spirit*,' (or, the Lord gave his Word,) 'and great was the company of the preachers.' For so I make bold to render that prophecy of David. Christ was 'the Word' of God, *Verbum æternum*; but the Spirit was the Word of God, *Verbum patet factum*: Christ was the Word manifested *in* the flesh; the Spirit was the Word manifested *to* flesh, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against the flesh.

The gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but 'the manifestation of the Spirit is the gospel of Jesus Christ:' and because he was this day manifested, the gospel was this day first preached, and it became a law to us, called 'the law of the Spirit of life;'¹ that is, a law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal. But the gospel is called 'the Spirit,' 1. Because it contains in it such glorious mysteries, which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter itself, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of human understanding could have found out the incarnation of a God; that two natures, a finite and an infinite, could have been concentrated into one hypostasis, or person; that a virgin should be a mother; that dead men should live again; that the *κόνις ὀστέων λυθέντων*, 'the ashes of dissolved bones' should become bright as the sun, blessed as the angels, swift in motion as thought, clear as the purest noon; that God should so love us, as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that himself must die that he might pardon us; that God's most holy Son should give us his body to eat, and his blood to crown our chalices, and his Spirit to sanctify our souls, to turn our bodies into temperance, our souls into minds, our minds into spirit, our spirit into glory; that he, who can give us all things, who is Lord of men and angels, and King of all the creatures, should pray to God for us without intermission; that he, who reigns over all the world, should, at the day of judgment, 'give up the kingdom to God the Father;' and yet, after this

¹ Rom. viii. 2.

resignation, himself and we with him should for ever reign the more gloriously; that we should be justified by faith in Christ, and that charity should be a part of faith, and that both should work as acts of duty, and as acts of relation; that God should crown the imperfect endeavours of his saints with glory, and that a human act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance; that the wicked, for the transient pleasure of a few minutes, should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains; that the waters of baptism, when they are hallowed by the Spirit, shall purge the soul from sin; and that the spirit of man should be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious elements, and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to heaven; and, after all this, that all Christian people, all that will be saved, must be partakers of the divine nature, of the nature, the infinite nature, of God, and must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them? These are articles of so mysterious a philosophy, that we could have inferred them from no premises, discoursed them on the stock of no natural or scientific principles; nothing but God and God's Spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the gospel is *Spiritus patefactus*, 'the manifestation of the Spirit,' *ad ædificationem*,¹ as the apostle calls it, 'for edification,' and building us up to be a holy temple to the Lord.

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious articles, we could not, by any human power, have understood them, unless the Spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 7.

capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. The animal,¹ or the 'natural man, the man that hath not the Spirit, cannot discern the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned:'² that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of Righteousness, and by that eye whose bird is the Holy Dove, whose candle is the gospel.

He that shall discourse Euclid's Elements to a swine, or preach (as venerable Bede's story reports of him) to a rock, or talk metaphysics to a boar, will as much prevail on his assembly as St. Peter and St. Paul could do on uncircumcised hearts and ears, on the indisposed Greeks and prejudicate Jews. An ox will relish the tender flesh of kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual and unsanctified man will do the discourses of angels or of an apostle, if he should come to preach the secrets of the gospel. And we find it true by a sad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by his servants the prophets, by his Son, by his apostles, by sermons, by spiritual books, by thousands of homilies, and arts of counsel and insinuation; and we sit as unconcerned as the pillars of a church, and hear the sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a gazette? And if ever it come to pass that we tremble, as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of 'righteousness and judgment to come,' then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to

¹ *Animalis homo, ψυχικός*; (that is, as St. Jude expounds the word, *πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχων*.)

² 1 Cor. ii. 14.

³ "Scio incapacem te sacramenti, impie;

Non posse cæcis mentibus mysterium

Haurire nostrum: nil diurnum nox capit."—Prudent.

in Chrysostom

do but to give the good man a hearing; and (as Anacharsis said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to cast account withal; so) our hearers make use of sermons and discourses evangelical, but to fill up void spaces of their time, to help to tell an hour with, or pass it without tediousness. The reason of this is a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness; they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; 'for these things are spiritually discerned.' They would think the preacher rude, if he could say they are not Christians, they are not within the covenant of the gospel; but it is certain, that 'the Spirit of manifestation' is not yet on them; and that is the first effect of the Spirit, whereby we can be called sons of God, or relatives of Christ. If we do not apprehend, and greedily suck in, the precepts of this holy discipline, as aptly as merchants do discourse of gain, or farmers of fair harvests, we have nothing but the name of Christians; but we are no more such really, than mandrakes are men, or sponges are living creatures.

3. The gospel is called 'Spirit,' because it consists of spiritual promises and spiritual precepts, and makes all men that embrace it truly, to be spiritual men; and therefore St. Paul adds an epithet beyond this, calling it 'a quickening Spirit,'¹ that is, it puts life into spirits, which the law could not. The law bound us to punishment, but did not help us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of eternal life to its disciples. 'The Spirit,' that is, 'the gospel,' only, does this: and this alone

¹ Cor. xv. 45.

is it which comforts afflicted minds, which puts activeness into wearied spirit, which inflames our cold desires, and does ἀναζωπυρεῖ, 'blows up sparks' into live coals, and coals up to flames into perpetual burnings. And it is impossible that any man who believes and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, and never-ceasing joys that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the gospel, should not desire them; and, unless he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty pursuances. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madness in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals, that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken fever, or the vanity of a mistress, or the rage of a passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However, this promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our souls.

4. But beyond this is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithful. The gospel is called the 'Spirit,' because by and in the gospel God hath given to us not only 'the Spirit of manifestation,' that is, of instruction and of catechism, of faith and confident assent; but the 'Spirit of confirmation, or obsignation' to all them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ: that is, the power of God is come on our hearts, by which, in an admirable manner, we are made sure of a glorious inheritance; made sure, I say, in the nature of the thing; and our own persuasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning, and a reasonable hope; in the strength of

which, and by whose aid, as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise, so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are enabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprisoned by ambition and secular designs. This the Spirit of God does work in all his servants; and is called, 'the Spirit of oblation, or the confirming Spirit,' because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternal; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the gospel. And this is the sense of 'the Spirit' mentioned in the text; 'Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:' that is, if ye be made partakers of the gospel, or of 'the Spirit of manifestation;' if ye be truly entitled to God, and have received the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are 'spiritual;' ye are 'in the Spirit: if ye have the Spirit in one sense to any purpose, ye have it also in another: if the Spirit be in you, you are in it; if it hath given you hope, it hath also enabled and ascertained your duty. For 'the Spirit of manifestation' will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not 'the Spirit of oblation:' if the Holy Ghost be not come on you to great purposes of holiness, all other pretences are vain,—'ye are still in the flesh,' which 'shall never inherit the kingdom of God.'

'In the Spirit;' that is, in the power of the Spirit. So the Greeks call him *ἐνθεον*, who is possessed by a spirit, whom God hath filled with

a celestial immission ; he is said to be in God, when God is in him. And it is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards ; they are *in custodia*, that is, “in their power,” under their command, moved at their dispose ; they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visitors whom they appoint, and must be employed as they shall suffer : so are men who are in the Spirit ; that is, they believe as he teaches, they work as he enables, they choose what he calls good, they are friends of his friends, and they hate with his hatred—with this only difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills ; but they that are under the command of the Spirit, do all things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cheerfully ; and their will is now the prisoner, but it is *in libera custodia*, the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else, because it is extremely in love with this : as the saints and angels in their state of beatific vision cannot choose but love God ; and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessened, because the object fills all the capacities of the will and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object, or the apprehension ; but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation, when it entirely pursues a good with so certain determination and clear election, that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons of God ; it is a holy and amiable captivity to the Spirit : the will of man is in love with those chains which draw us to God,

and loves the fetters that confine us to the pleasures and religion of the kingdom. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrained, and his head is prisoner, when it is encircled with a crown; so when the Son of God hath made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as princes within the circle of their diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the law is a law of liberty, and 'his service is perfect freedom;' and the more we are subjects, the more 'we shall reign as kings;' and the faster we run, the easier is our burden; and Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion, without them the body falls; and we do not pity birds, when in summer we wish them unfeathered and callow, or bald as eggs, that they might be cooler and lighter. Such is the load and captivity of the soul, when we do the work of God, and are his servants, and under the government of the Spirit. They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of out-laws, and the licentiousness of anarchy, and the freedom of sad widows and distressed orphans; for so rebels, and fools, and children, long to be rid of their princes, and their guardians, and their tutors, that they may be accursed without law, and be undone without control, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher, and without discipline. He that is in the Spirit, is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great heirs are; only, the first seizure the Spirit makes is on the will. He that loves the yoke of Christ, and the discipline of the gospel, he is in the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit's power.

On this foundation the apostle hath built these two propositions: 1. Whosoever hath not the

Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: he does not belong to Christ at all: he is not partaker of his Spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of his glory. 2. Whosoever is in Christ is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ; that is, lives a spiritual, a holy, and a sanctified life. These are to be considered distinctly.

I. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediately before the ascension, our blessed Saviour bid his disciples 'tarry in Jerusalem, till they should receive the promise of the Father.' Whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in the actual communion of the church of God, shall certainly receive this promise: 'for it is made to you and to your children,' saith St. Peter, 'and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.' All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great instrument of distinction between the law and the gospel. In the law, God gave his Spirit, 1. to some; to them, 2. extra-regularly; 3. without solemnity; 4. in small proportions, like the dew on Gideon's fleece; a little portion was wet sometimes with the dew of heaven, when all the earth besides was dry. And the Jews called it *filiam vocis*, 'the daughter of a voice;' still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate, by way of enthusiasm,¹ rather than for instruction; and God spake by the prophets, transmitting the sound as through an organ-pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understood not. But in the gospel, the Spirit is given without measure; first poured forth on our head Christ Jesus; then descending on the beard of Aaron, the fathers of the church, and thence falling,

¹ i. e. Inspiration.—ED.

like the tears of the balsam of Judea, on the foot of the plant, on the lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a solemn ceremony, and conveyed by a sacrament; and is now, not the daughter of a voice, but the mother of many voices, of divided tongues, and united hearts; of the tongues of prophets, and the duty of saints; of the sermons of apostles, and the wisdom of governors: it is the parent of boldness and fortitude to martyrs, the fountain of learning to doctors, an ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the ship and bounds of the catholic church; so that old men and young men, maidens and boys, the scribe and the unlearned, the judge and the advocate, the priest and the people, are full of the Spirit, if they belong to God. Moses's wish is fulfilled, and all the Lord's people are prophets in some sense or other.

In the wisdom of the ancients it was observed, that there are four great cords, which tie the heart of man to inconvenience and a prison, make it a servant of vanity, and an heir of corruption: 1. pleasure, 2. pain; 3. fear, and, 4. desire. These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and all the powers that God hath given him.¹ These are those evil spirits that possess the heart of man, and mingle with all his actions; so that either men are tempted to 1. lust by pleasure, or, 2. to baser arts by covetousness, or, 3. to impatience by sorrow,

¹ Πρὸς τὸ τετράχορδον δ' ὅλον,
τὴν ἡδονὴν, ἐπιθυμίαν, λύπην, φόβον,
ἀσκήσιώσ γε καὶ μάχης πολλῆς δεῖν
οὔτοι γάρ, οὔτοι καὶ διὰ σπλαχνῶν ἀεὶ
χωροῦσι καὶ κενῶσιν ἀνθρώπων κέαρ.—Agathon.

or, 4. to dishonourable actions by fear; and this is the state of man by nature, and under the law, and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cured these four inconveniences, and restrained or sweetened these unwholesome waters.

1. God gave us his Spirit that we might be insensible of worldly pleasures, having our souls wholly filled with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when God's Spirit hath entered us, and possessed us as his temple, or as his dwelling, instantly we begin to taste manna, and to loathe the diet of Egypt; we begin to consider concerning heaven, and to prefer eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the soul above the sottish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a drunken meeting cannot make a recompence for the pains of a surfeit, and that night's intemperance, much less for the torments of eternity; then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustful appetites is not worth the charges of a surgeon, much less can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sickness, the death, and the hell of lustful persons; then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a crown unjustly; or that, for the hazard of a victory, he should throw away all his hopes of heaven certainly.

A man that hath tasted of God's Spirit, can instantly discern the madness that is in rage, the folly and the disease that are in envy, the anguish and tediousness that are in lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith and telling a lie; and understands things truly as they are: that is, that charity is the greatest nobleness in the world; that

religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that humility is the surest way to honour. And all these relishes are nothing but antepasts of heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow the Lamb, and the virgins sing there where the mother of God shall reign; and the zealous converters of souls, and labourers in God's vineyard, shall worship eternally; where St. Peter and St. Paul do wear their crowns of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God: the very expectation of which, proceeding from a hope begotten in us by 'the Spirit of manifestation,' and bred up and strengthened by 'the Spirit of obsignation,'—is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a spiritual man can no more be removed or enticed from the love of God and of religion, than the moon from her orb, or a mother from loving the son of her joys and of her sorrows.

This was observed by St. Peter: 'As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.'¹ When once we have tasted the grace of God, the sweetnesses of his Spirit, then no food but 'the food of angels,' no cup but 'the cup of salvation,' the 'divining cup,' in which we drink salvation to our God, and call on the name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving. And there is no greater external testimony that we are in the Spirit, and that the

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 2.

Spirit dwells in us, than if we find joy and delight and spiritual pleasure in the greatest mysteries of our religion: if we communicate often, and that with appetite, and a forward choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly fixed on God, and on the offices of a holy worship. He that loathes good meat is sick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to, the food of angels, the wine of elect souls, is fit to succeed the prodigal at his banquet of sin and husks, and to be partaker of the table of devils; but all they who have God's Spirit, love to feast at the supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the Spirit, or servants to the Spirit. I have read of a spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream, but such as made great impression on him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasms, not easily disbanding; and when he awaked he knew not his cell, he remembered not him that slept in the same dorter,¹ nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oil from wine; but called out for his vision again: "Give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion, St. Jerome, my assistant angels."² And this lasted till he was told of his duty, and matter of obedience, and the fear of a sin had disenchanted him, and caused him to take care, lest he lose the substance out of greediness to possess the shadow.

And if it were given to any of us to see Paradise,

¹ Dorture, dormitory.—ED.

² "Redde mihi campos meos floridos, columnam auream, comitem Hieronymum, assistentes angelos."

or the third heaven, as it was to St. Paul, could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead thither? Now what a vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain him. They that have him really, and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create or enlarge our appetites of things below: spiritual men are not designed to reign on earth, but to reign over their lusts and sottish appetites. The Spirit doth not inflame our thirst of wealth, but extinguishes it, and maks us to 'esteem all things as loss, and as dung, so that we may gain Christ.' No gain then is pleasant but godliness, no ambition but longings after heaven, no revenge but against ourselves for sinning; nothing but God and Christ, as the king of Sodom said to Abraham: 'Secure but the souls to us, and take our goods.' Indeed, this is a good sign that we have the Spirit.

St. John spake a hard saying, but by the Spirit of manifestation we are all taught to understand it: 'Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.'¹ The seed of God is the Spirit, which hath a plastic power to efform us *in similitudinem filiorum Dei*, 'into the image of the sons of God;' and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit dwells in us, we cannot sin; that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures, to sin. And as we say, we cannot endure

¹ 1 Epist. iii. 9.

such a potion, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature; so all spiritual men, all that are born of God, and the seed of God remains in them, 'they cannot sin;' cannot *without trouble*, and doing against their natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can sip up, by little draughts, mixtures of aloes, and rhubarb, of henbane, or the deadly nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally, or willingly, or cheerfully, or with delight. Every sin is against a good man's nature; he is ill at ease when he hath missed his usual prayers, he is amazed if he have fallen into an error, he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin as he thinks of an enemy, or the horrors of a midnight apparition: for all his capacities, his understanding, and his choosing faculties, are filled up with the opinion and persuasions, with the love and with the desires, of God. And this, I say, is the great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an antidote against worldly pleasures. And therefore St. Paul joins them as consequent to each other: 'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,' &c.¹ First, we are enlightened in baptism, and by 'the Spirit of manifestation,' the revelations of the gospel; then we relish and taste interior excellences, and we receive the Holy Ghost, 'the

¹ Heb. vi. 4.

Spirit of confirmation,' and he gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come; that is, of the great efficacy that is in the article of eternal life, to persuade us to religion and holy living; then we feel that as the belief of that article dwells on our understanding, and is incorporated into our wills and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to defy all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortify it by the powers of this article: those are 'the powers of the world to come.'

2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ, as an antidote against sorrows, against impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the cross. There are in Scripture noted two births besides the natural; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The first is, to be born of water and the Spirit. It is ἐν ᾧ δυνάμει, one thing signified by a divided appellative, by two substantives, "water and the Spirit," that is, *Spiritus aqueus*, the 'Spirit moving upon the waters' of baptism. The second is, to be born of 'Spirit and fire:' for so Christ was promised to 'baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire;' that is, *cum Spiritu igneo*, 'with a fiery Spirit,' the Spirit as it descended in Pentecost in the shape of fiery tongues. And as the watery Spirit washed away the sins of the church, so the Spirit of fire enkindles charity and the love of God. "The water cleanseth, the fire purifieth,"¹ says Plutarch: the Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it enables the church with gifts and graces. And from these

¹ Τὸ πῦρ καθαίρει, τὸ ὕδωρ ἀγνίζει.

there is another operation of the new birth, but the same Spirit, the Spirit of rejoicing, or *spiritus exultans*, *spiritus lætitiæ*: 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.'¹ There is a certain joy and spiritual rejoicing, that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow; a joy given to allay the sorrows of secular troubles, and to alleviate the burden of persecution. This St. Paul notes to this purpose: 'And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.'² Worldly afflictions and spiritual joys may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply us out of his storehouses, the sorrow of this world would be more and unmixed, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for natural confidences. For who shall make him recompence that lost his life in a duel, fought about a draught of wine, or a cheaper woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments in testimony of a proposition of natural philosophy? And by what instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick, and poor, and disgraced, and vicious, and lies cursing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That man's condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, 'the Spirit of comfort.' Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking in the inheritance of Jesus; this is the faith and patience of the saints; this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordial of all languishing sinners, the

¹ Rom. xv. 13.² 1 Thes. i. 6.

support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtful, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of restitution: and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of Christianity, that it was no unfrequent thing to see holy persons court a martyrdom with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes on us, we are *ὀλιγόψυχοι*. We have little souls, little faith, and as little patience;¹ we fall at every stumbling-block, and sink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God 'fills us with joy in believing:' and the man that is in a great joy, cares not for any trouble that is less than his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that he hath turned it into a precept, 'Rejoice evermore;' and, 'Rejoice in the Lord always; and again, I say rejoice.'² But this rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us; so the Apostle, 'rejoicing in hope.'³ For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrows; yet this is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think on it; but the hope of life eternal can never fail us,

¹ "Inopis nos atque pusilli finxerunt animi."

² 1 Thes. v. 16.

³ Rom. xii. 12.

and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing.' To death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal: as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwreck. And I desire you, by the way, to observe how good a God we serve, and how excellent a religion Christ taught, when one of his great precepts is, that we should 'rejoice and be exceeding glad:' and God hath given us the Spirit of rejoicing, not a sullen melancholy spirit, not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the Spirit of his Son, consigning us by a holy conscience to 'joys unspeakable and full of glory.' And from hence you may also infer, that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident, they put out their own fires which the Spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behind the cloud.

PART II.

3. The Spirit of God is given us as an antidote against evil concupiscences and sinful desires, and is then called 'the Spirit of prayer and supplication.' For, ever since the affections of the outward man prevailed on the ruins of the soul, all our desires

¹ ——— "Ibimus, ibimus,
Utcunque præcedes, supremum
Carpere iter comites parati."

Hor. Od. ii. 17. 10.

were sensual, and therefore hurtful: for, ever after, our body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance or imperfection of Gentile philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths full of blood, and their hearts full of malice; and they prayed accordingly, for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, for the satisfaction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by any lust, by any devil whatsoever.

The Jews were better taught; for God was their teacher, and he gave the Spirit to them in single rays. But as the 'Spirit of oblation' was given to them under a seal, and within a veil, so the 'Spirit of manifestation, or 'patefaction,' was like the gem of a vine, or the bud of a rose, plain *indices* and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetness; but yet scarce out of the doors of their causes: they had the infancy of knowledge, and revelations to them were given as catechism is taught to our children; which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the tongue of a bee, and understand with the heart of a child; that is, weakly and imperfectly. And they understood so little, that, 1. they thought God heard them not, unless they spake their prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips; and, 2. their forms of prayer were so few and seldom, that to teach a form of prayer, or to compose a collect, was thought a work fit for a prophet, or the founder of an institution. 3. Add to this, that as their promises were temporal so were their hopes; as were their hopes so were their desires; and according to their desires so were their prayers. And although the

Psalms of David were their great office, and the treasury of devotion to their nation,—and very worthily; yet it was full of wishes for temporals, invocations of God the avenger, on God the Lord of hosts, on God the enemy of their enemies; and they desired their nation to be prospered, and themselves blessed, and distinguished from all the world by the effects of such desires. This was the state of prayer in their synagogues; save only that it had also this alloy; 4. that their addresses to God were crass, material, typical, and full of shadows and imaginary, and patterns of things to come; and so in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect. But that we may see how great things the Lord hath done for us, God hath poured his Spirit into our hearts, ‘the Spirit of prayer and supplication’

And now, 1. Christians ‘pray in their spirit,’ with sighs and groans, and know that God, who dwells within them, can as clearly distinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit, as plainly as he knows the voice of his own thunder, or could discern the letter of the law written in the tables of stone by the finger of God.

2. Likewise ‘the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.’ This is, when God sends an affliction or persecution on us, we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand on the wound, and never take it off but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadness: and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sickness, to be delivered from a tyrant, to be snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger. But the Spirit of God hath, from all sad accidents, drawn the veil of error and the cloud of intolerableness, and taught us that our happiness

cannot consist in freedom or deliverances from persecutions, but in patience, resignation, and noble sufferance; and that we are not then so blessed when God hath turned our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of virtues: so that now the Spirit having helped our infirmities, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our sorrows and impatience, by this proposition, that 'All things work together for the good of them that fear God,' he taught us to pray for grace, for patience under the cross, for charity to our persecutors, for rejoicing in tribulation, for perseverance and boldness in the faith, and for whatsoever will bring us safely to heaven.

3. Whereas only a Moses or a Samuel, a David or a Daniel, a John the Baptist or the Messias himself, could describe and indite forms of prayer and thanksgiving to the tune and accent of heaven; now every wise and good man is instructed perfectly in the Scriptures, which are the writings of the Spirit, what things he may, and what things he must ask for.

4. The Spirit of God hath made our services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and religion, the consequence of a spiritual sacrifice, and of a holy union with God. The prayer of a Christian is with the effects of the 'Spirit of sanctification;' and then we pray with the Spirit, when we pray with holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift of the Spirit. And this is by St. James called 'the prayer of faith,' and is said to be certain that it shall prevail. Such a praying with the Spirit when our prayers are the voices of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sancti-

fied by God's Spirit, shall never fail of its effect; because then it is that 'the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us;' that is, hath enabled us to do it on his strengths; we speak his sense, we live his life, we breathe his accents, we desire in order to his purposes, and our persons are gracious by his holiness, and are accepted by his interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ. 'This is 'praying with the Spirit.' To which, by way of explication, I add these two annexes of holy prayer, in respect of which also every good man prays with the Spirit.

5. The Spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our prayers; and this St. Paul calls 'serving of God in his Spirit,'¹ that is, with a willing mind; not as Jonas did his errand, but as Christ did die for us; he was straitened till he had accomplished it. And they that say their prayers out of custom only, or to comply with external circumstances, or collateral advantages, or pray with trouble and unwillingness, give a very great testimony that they have not the Spirit of Christ within them, that Spirit which maketh intercession for the saints: but he that delighteth in his prayers, not by a sensible or fantastic pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living, and praying accordingly, that man hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this Spirit it is that Christ prays in heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace; our prayers are an abominable sacrifice, and send up to God no better

¹ Rom. i. 9.

a perfume than if we burned assafœtida, or the raw flesh of a murdered man on the altar of incense.

6. The Spirit of Christ and of prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together : for as our faith is, and our trust in God, so is our hope, and so is our prayer ; weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works and in desires ; for the words of prayer are no part of the spirit of prayer. Words may be the body of it, but the spirit of prayer always consists in holiness ; that is, in holy desires and holy actions. Words are not properly capable of being holy ; all words are in themselves servants of things ; and the holiness of a prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expression, but in the spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its employment. This is the verification of that great prophecy which Christ made, that 'in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth ;' that is, with a pure mind, with holy desires for spiritual things, according to the mind of the Spirit, in the imitation of Christ's intercession, with perseverance, with charity or love. That is the Spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the gospel, and the formalities of prayers as they are Christian and evangelical.

7. Some men have thought of a seventh way, and explicate our praying in the Spirit by a mere volubility of language ; which indeed is a direct undervaluing the Spirit of God and of Christ, 'the Spirit of manifestation and intercession :' it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the law ; it is to worship God in outward forms, and to

think that God's service consists in shells and rinds, in lips and voices, in shadows and images of things; it is to retire from Christ to Moses; and, at the best, it is going from real graces to imaginary gifts. And when praying with the spirit bath in it so many excellencies, and consists of so many parts of holiness and sanctification, and is an act of the inner man; we shall be infinitely mistaken if we let go this substance, and catch at the shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary, useless gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men, is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the Spirit of Christ as to make it no other than the breath of the lungs. For though it might be possible, that at the first, and when forms of prayer were few and seldom, the Spirit of God might dictate the very words to the apostles and first Christians; yet, it follows not, that therefore he does so still, to all that pretend praying with the Spirit. For if he did not then, at the first, dictate words, (as we know not whether he did or no,) why shall he be supposed to do so now? If he did then, it follows that he does not now: because his doing it then was sufficient for all men since; for so the forms taught by the Spirit were patterns for others to imitate, in all the descending ages of the church. There was once an occasion so great, that the Spirit of God did think it a work fit for him to teach a man to weave silk, or embroider gold, or work in brass, as it happened to Bezaleel and Aholiab: but then every weaver or worker in brass may, by the same reason, pretend that he works by the Spirit, as that he prays by the Spirit, if by

prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of working, it was certain that the Spirit did teach, in the case of inditing or forming the words, it is not certain whether he did or no; yet because in both it was extraordinary, if it was at all, and ever since in both it is infinitely needless; to pretend the Spirit in forms of every man's making, (even though they be of contrary religions, and pray one against the other,) it may serve an end of a fantastic and hypochondriacal religion, or a secret ambition, but not the ends of God, or the honour of the Spirit.

The Jews in their declensions to folly and idolatry did worship the stone of imagination; that is, certain smooth images, in which, by art-magic, pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stolen goods; and God severely forbade this baseness.¹ But we also have taken up this folly, and worship the stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantasms and speculative images in our fancy, and we fall down and worship them; never considering that the Spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of Christian religion; or rather, it is that duty in which all graces are concentrated. Prayer is charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to God's will, a desiring according to the desires of heaven, an imitation of Christ's intercession; and prayer must suppose all holiness, or else it is nothing: and therefore, all that in which men need God's Spirit, all that is in order to prayer. Baptism is but a prayer, and the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper is but a prayer; a

¹ Levit. xxvi. 1.

prayer of sacrifice representative, and a prayer of oblation, and a prayer of intercession, and a prayer of thanksgiving. And obedience is a prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then he hath sanctified the prayer of the man, and not till then. And if ever there was, or could be, any other praying with the Spirit, it was such a one as a wicked man might have; and therefore it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the saints and men of the world. But this only, which I have described from the fountains of Scripture, is that which a good man can have, and therefore, this is it in which we ought to rejoice: 'that he that glories, may glory in the Lord.

Thus I have, as I could, described the effluxes of the holy Spirit on us in his great channels. But the great effect of them is this: that as by the arts of the spirits of darkness and our own malice, our souls are turned into flesh, (not in the natural sense, but in the moral and theological,) and *animalis homo* is the same with *carnalis*; that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions; so, on the other side, by the grace of God, and 'the promise of the Father,' and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh, and reduced back to the entireness of animal operations, but they are heightened into spirit, and transformed into a new nature. And this is a new article, and now to be considered.

II. St. Jerome tells of the custom of the empire; when a tyrant was overcome, they used to break the head of his statues, and on the same trunk to

set the head of the conqueror, and so it passed wholly for the new prince. So it is in the kingdom of grace. As soon as the tyrant sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new name given us, and we are esteemed a new creation; and not only changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an essential constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so; and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the gospel. Every man naturally consists of soul and body; but every Christian man that belongs to Christ hath more; for he hath body, and soul, and spirit. My text is plain for it: 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' And by Spirit is not meant only the graces of God, and his gifts enabling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man than so. But as when God made man, he made him after his own image, and breathed into him the spirit of life, and he was made into a 'living soul:' then he was made a man; so in the new creation, Christ, 'by whom God made the worlds,' intends to conform us to his image, and he hath given us 'the Spirit of adoption,' by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made new creatures, capable of a new state, entitled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wills: 'Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'¹ And this is called 'the seed of God,' when it relates to the principle and

¹ 2 Cor. v. 17.

cause of this production; but the thing that is produced is a spirit, and that is as much in nature beyond a soul as a soul is beyond a body. This great mystery I should not utter but on the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible doctor; I mean St. Paul, who from Christ taught the church more secrets than all the whole college besides; 'and the very God of peace, sanctify you wholly; and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'¹ We are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unless, besides our souls and bodies, our spirits also be kept blameless. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above human reason: but 'the word of God,' saith the same apostle, 'is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit:'² and that hath taught us to distinguish the principle of a new life from the principle of the old, the celestial from the natural; and thus it is.

The Spirit (as I now discourse of it) is a principle infused into us by God, when we become his children, whereby we live the life of grace, and understand the secrets of the kingdom, and have passions and desires of things beyond and contrary to our natural appetites, enabling us not only to sobriety, which is the duty of the body,—not only to justice, which is the rectitude of the soul,—but to such a sanctity as makes us like to God; for so saith the Spirit of God, 'Be ye holy, as I am: be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as he is perfect:' which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be *in similitudine naturæ*

¹ 1 Thess. v. 23.

² Heb. iv. 12.

'in the likeness of that nature,' which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it we might resemble his excellency and holiness. And this I conceive to be the meaning of St. Peter: 'According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness,' (that is, to this new life of godliness,) 'through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature :'¹ so we read it; but it is something mistaken: it is not the *τῆς θείας φύσεως*, 'the divine nature;' for God's nature is indivisible, and incommunicable; but it is spoken '*participativè*,' or *per analogiam*, 'partakers of a divine nature;' that is, of this new and godlike nature given to every person that serves God, whereby he is sanctified, and made the child of God, and framed into the likeness of Christ. The Greeks generally call this *χάρισμα*, 'a gracious gift,' an extraordinary super-addition to nature; not a single gift in order to single purposes, but a universal principle; and it remains on all good men during their lives, and after their death, and is that 'white stone' spoken of in the Revelation, 'and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that hath it :'² and by this, God's sheep, at the day of judgment, shall be discerned from goats. If their spirits be presented to God pure and unblameable, this great *χάρισμα*, this talent, which God hath given to all Christians to improve in the banks of grace and religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the fulness of the measure of Christ, (for it is

¹ 2 Epist. i. 3, 4.

² Apoc. ii. 17.

Christ's Spirit; and as it is in us, it is called 'the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,'¹) then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall pass into an eternal inheritance in the portion of our elder brother.

I need not apply this discourse: the very mystery itself is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable, by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness. "He that gives great things to us, ought to have great acknowledgments:"²—and Seneca said concerning wise men, "That he that doth benefits to others, hides those benefits; as a man lays up great treasures in earth, which he must never see with his eyes, unless a great occasion forces him to dig the graves, and produce that which he buried; but all the while the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation." So it is with God and us: for this huge benefit of the Spirit, which God gives us, is for our good deposited into our souls; not made for forms and ostentation, not to be looked on, or serve little ends; but growing in the secret of our souls, and swelling up to a treasure, making us in this world rich by title and relation; but it shall be produced in the great necessities of doomsday. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of God's Spirit, God will kindle another in his anger that shall never be quenched: but if we entertain God's Spirit with our own purities, and employ it diligently, and serve it willingly, (for God's Spirit is a loving Spirit,) then we shall really be turned into spirits.

¹ Phil. i. 19.

² Quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna rependi.

Irenæus had a proverbial saying: "They that present three things right to God, they are perfect;"¹ that is, a chaste body, a righteous soul, and a holy spirit. And the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amiss, though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery; the soul of man in this life is *in potentia adesse spiritum*, "it is designed to be a spirit;" but in the world to come it shall be actually as very a spirit as an angel is. And this state is expressed by the apostle calling it 'the earnest of the Spirit:' that is, here it is begun, and given as an antepast of glory, and a principle of grace; but then we shall have it in plenitude.² Here and there it is the same; but here we have the earnest, there the riches and the inheritance.

But then, if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we receive not 'the Spirit of God in vain,' but remember that it is a new life: and as no man can pretend that a person is alive, that doth not always do the works of life; so it is certain no man hath the Spirit of God, but he that lives the life of grace, and doth the works of the Spirit; that is, 'in all holiness, and justice, and sobriety.'

Spiritus qui accedit animo, vel Dei est, vel dæmonis, said Tertullian: "Every man hath within him the Spirit of God, or the spirit of the devil." The spirit of fornication is an unclean devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of malice or uncharitableness; for the

Perfecti sunt, qui tria sine querela Deo exhibent.

¹ — — Regit idem spiritus artus

Orbe alio——

Spirit of God is the spirit of love: for as by purities God's Spirit sanctifies the body, so by love he purifies the soul, and makes the soul grow into a spirit, into a divine nature. But God knows that even in Christian societies, we see the devils walk up and down every day and every hour,—the devil of uncleanness, and the devil of drunkenness; the devil of malice, and the devil of rage; the spirit of filthy speaking, and the spirit of detraction; a proud spirit, and the spirit of rebellion: and yet all call "Christian." It is generally supposed that unclean spirits walk in the night, and so it used to be; 'for they that are drunk are drunk in the night,' said the apostle. But Suidas tells of certain *empusæ*¹ that used to appear at noon, at such times as the Greeks did celebrate the funerals of the dead: and at this day some of the Russians fear the noon-day devil, which appeareth like a mourning widow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their arms and legs, unless they worship her. The prophet David speaketh of both kinds: 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; and, from the devil at noon thou shalt be free.'² It were happy if we were so: but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness, in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their scenes of darkness in the face of the sun, in open defiance of God, and all laws, and all modesty. There is in such men the spirit of impudence as well as of impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher; for every habitual sin doth not only put us in the power of the devil, but turns us into his very nature: just as

¹ Goblins.—ED.

² Psal. xci. 5.

the Holy Ghost transforms us into the image of God.

Here, therefore, I have a greater argument to persuade you to holy living than Moses had to the sons of Israel. 'Behold, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;' so said Moses: but I add, that I have, on the stock of this Scripture, set before you the good Spirit and the bad; God and the devil: choose unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, 'you are of your father the devil;' ye are begot of his principles, and follow his pattern, and shall pass into his portion, when ye are led captive by him at his will; and remember what a sad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternal portion of devils. But he that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father and his Lord, he despises the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spiritual, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and support, and religion is his employment, and 'godliness is his gain:' and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God; and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in obedience to God, and in charity to his brother. And of such a man we cannot make judgment by his fortune, or by his acquaintances; by his circumstances, or by his adherences; for they are the appendages of a natural man: but 'the spiritual is judged of no man;' that is, the rare excellences that make him happy, do not yet make him illustrious, unless he

will reckon virtue to be a great fortune, and holiness to be great wisdom, and God to be the best friend, and Christ the best relative, and the Spirit the hugest advantage, and heaven the greatest reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit him down and reckon the felicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this : that since the Spirit of God is a new nature, and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught and enabled to serve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of such actions, which men are pleased to call "sins of infirmity." Whosoever hath the Spirit of God, lives the life of grace. The Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often sins which we think unavoidable, because we call them "natural infirmities."

'But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.' The state of sin is a state of death. The state of man under the law was a state of bondage and infirmity, as St. Paul largely describes him in the seventh chapter to the Romans : but he that hath the Spirit is made alive, and free and strong, and a conqueror over all the powers and violences of sin. Such a man resists temptations, falls not under the assault of sin, returns not to the sin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and sorrow : but he that falls under a crime, to which he still hath a strong and vigorous inclination ; he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then sins again, and then weeps again, and calls

himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to that circle ; this man hath not the Spirit : ' for where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty ;' there is no such bondage, and a returning folly to the commands of sin. But because men deceive themselves with calling this bondage a pitiable and excusable infirmity, it will not be useless to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men, from the state of a pretended infirmity, fall into a real death.

1. No great sin is a sin of infirmity, or excusable on that stock. But that I may be understood, we must know that every sin is, in some sense or other, a sin of infirmity. When a man is in the state of spiritual sickness or death, he is in a state of infirmity ; for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his judgment, and weak in his reasonings, impotent in his passions, of childish resolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist as easily as the rude contexture of uncombining cables in the violence of a northern tempest : and he that is thus in infirmity cannot be excused ; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin ; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to do his duty. Such a man is a ' servant of sin,' a slave of the devil, an heir of corruption, absolutely under command : and every man is so, who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it. For what can he be but a servant of sin who fain would avoid it but cannot ? that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him ; Christ dwells not in his soul ; for ' where the Spirit is, there is liberty :' and all that are in the Spirit, are the sons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin. But there are also sins of infirmity which are single

actions, intervening seldom, in little instances unavoidable, or through a faultless ignorance: such as these are always the alloys of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath paid, and they are never to be accounted to good men, save only to make them more wary and more humble. Now concerning these it is that I say, no great sin is a sin of excusable or unavoidable infirmity; because, whosoever hath received the Spirit of God, hath sufficient knowledge of his duty, and sufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of mind, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to piety and religion. No man can justly say, that it is a sin of infirmity that he was drunk: for there are but three causes of every sin; a fourth is not imaginable. 1. If ignorance cause it, the sin is as full of excuse as the ignorance was innocent. But no Christian can pretend this to drunkenness, to murder, to rebellion, to uncleanness: for what Christian is so uninstructed but that he knows adultery is a sin? 2. Want of observation is the cause of many indiscreet and foolish actions. Now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape; because in the whole it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit, as to consider and reflect on every word and every thought. But it is, in this case, in God's laws otherwise than in man's; the great flies cannot pass through without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk, and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbour's wife before he be aware: therefore, the less the instance is, the more likely is it to be a sin of infirmity: and yet, if it be never so little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of infirmity. 3. But, because great crimes cannot pre-

tend to pass undiscernibly, it follows that they must come in at the door of malice, that is, of want of grace, in the absence of the Spirit; they destroy wherever they come, and the man dies if they pass on him.

It is true, there is flesh and blood in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule: the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail. And it were a strange condition, if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation and death, without all difference, save only that the godly sins unwillingly, and the ungodly sins willingly. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevaricated, the pretended unwillingness is the sign of a greater and baser slavery, and of a condition less to be endured: for the servitude which is against me is intolerable; but if I choose the state of a servant, I am free in my mind.¹

Certain it is, that such a person who fain would but cannot choose but commit adultery or drunkenness, is the veriest slave to sin that can be imagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit, and by the liberty of the sons of God; and there is no other difference, but that the mistaken good man feels his slavery, and sees his chains and his fetters; but therefore it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be a slave. No man can be a servant of sin and a servant of righteousness at the

“ ——— *Libertatis servaveris umbram,
Si, quidquid jubeare, velis. Tot rebus iniquis
Paruimus victi: venia est hæc sola pudoris,
Degenerisque metus, nil jam potuisse negari.*”

Lucan, iii. 146.

same time : but every man that hath the Spirit of God, is a servant of righteousness ; and therefore, whosoever find great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation, as to the present, because they willingly or unwillingly (it matters not much whether of the two) are servants of sin.

2. Sins of infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness only according to the weakness or infirmity of a man's understanding. So far as men (without their own fault) understand not their duty, or are possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse, or discerning powers, and acts ; so far, if a sin creeps on them, it is as natural, and as free from a law, as is the action of a child : but if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminal, and not excused by our infirmity, because it is chosen ; and a man's will hath no infirmity, but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions and sinful appetites : and that infirmity is the state of unregeneration.

3. The violence or strength of a temptation is not sufficient to excuse an action, or to make it accountable on the stock of a pitiable and innocent infirmity, if it leaves the understanding still able to judge ; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from ourselves ; and because we have in us a principle of baseness, which this temptation meets, and only persuades me to act, because I love it. Joseph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man ; and it is certain there are not many Christians but would fall under it, and call it a sin of infirmity, since they have been taught so to abuse themselves, by sewing fig-leaves

before their nakedness : but because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail on him. Some men cannot by any art of hell be tempted to be drunk ; others can no more resist an invitation to such a meeting, than they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart-blood, because their evil habits made them weak on that part. And some man, that is fortified against revenge, it may be, will certainly fall under a temptation to uncleanness : for every temptation is great or small according as the man is ; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand pounds a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie against his duty or his conscience.

4. No habitual sin, that is, no sin that returns constantly or frequently, that is repented of and committed again, and still repented of, and then again committed ; no such sin is excusable with a pretence of infirmity ; because that sin is certainly noted, and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weakness of nature, but the weakness of grace : the principle of this is an evil spirit, an habitual aversion from God, a dominion and empire of sin. And as no man, for his inclinations and aptness to the sins of the flesh, is to be called carnal, if he corrects his inclinations and turns them into virtues ; so no man can be called spiritual for his good wishes and apt inclinations to goodness, if these inclinations pass not into acts, and these acts into habits and holy customs, and walkings and conversation with God. But as natural concupiscence corrected becomes the matter of

virtue, so these good inclinations and condemnings of our sin, if they be ineffective, and end in sinful actions, are the perfect signs of a reprobate and unregenerated state.

The sum is this: an animal man, a man under the law, a carnal man, (for as to this they are all one,) is sold under sin, he is a servant of corruption, he falls frequently into the same sin to which he is tempted, he commends the law, he consents to it that it is good, he does not commend sin, he does some little things against it; but they are weak and imperfect, his lust is stronger, his passions violent and unmortified, his habits vicious, his customs sinful, and he lives in the regions of sin, and dies and enters into its portion. But a spiritual man, a man that is in a state of grace, who is born anew of the Spirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, he is led by the Spirit, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigorously; and although he sometimes slips, yet it is but seldom, it is in small instances; his life is such, as he cannot pretend to be justified by works and merit, but by mercy and the faith of Jesus Christ; yet he never sins great sins; if he does, he is for that present fallen from God's favour; and though possibly he may recover, (and the smaller or seldomer the sin is, the sooner may be his restitution,) yet for the present, I say, he is out of God's favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, sins not by any deliberate, consultive, knowing act: he is incident to such a surprise as may consist with the weakness and judgment of a good man; but whatsoever is, or must be considered, if it cannot pass without consideration, it

cannot pass without sin, and therefore cannot enter on him while he remains in that state. For 'he that is in Christ, in him the body is dead by reason of sin.' And the gospel did not differ from the law, but that the gospel gives grace and strength to do whatsoever it commands, which the law did not; and the greatness of the promise of eternal life is such an argument to them that consider it, that it must needs be of force sufficient to persuade a man to use all his faculties and all his strength, that he may obtain it. God exacted all on this stock; God knew this could do every thing: "*Nihil non in hoc præsumpsit Deus*," said one. 'This will make a satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despise reputation, and Saul to turn from a persecutor to an apostle. For since God hath given us reason to choose, and a promise to exchange for our temperance and faith, and charity and justice; for these, I say, happiness, exceeding gréat happiness, that we shall be kings, that we shall reign with God, with Christ, with all the holy angels for ever, in felicity so great that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us to do our duty. God hath not in heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger; which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of his we walk in his ways, and be ingrafted into his stock, and bring forth his fruits, 'the fruits of the Spirit,'—then 'we are

in Christ,' and 'Christ in us,'—then 'we walk in the Spirit,' and 'the Spirit dwells in us;' and our portion shall be there, where 'Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us,' that is, at the right hand of his Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON III.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART.

 JEREMIAH, XVII. 9.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can know it ?

PART I.

FOLLY and subtilty divide the greatest part of mankind ; and there is no other difference but this ; that some are crafty enough to deceive, others foolish enough to be cozened and abused : and yet the scales also turn ; for they that are the most crafty to cozen others, are the veriest fools, and most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his money, and lose their own innocency ; they disturb his rest, and vex their own conscience ; they throw him into prison, and themselves into hell ; they make poverty to be their brother's portion, and damnation to be their own. Man entered into the world first alone ; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him ; the serpent, and Eve, and himself, all joined,—first to make him a fool, and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable. But he first cozened himself,

'giving himself up to believe a lie;' and being desirous to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, he sinned before he fell; that is, he had within him a false understanding, and a depraved will: and these were the parents of his disobedience, and this was the parent of his infelicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entered, for himself and his posterity, into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easy, wilful, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so, that if nobody else will abuse him, he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and sensuality doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of man, in the rudeness and first lines of its visage, seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed.

For a man is helpless and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a raisin is able to kill him: any trooper out of the Egyptian army, a fly can do it, when it goes on God's errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every future contingency, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is encompassed with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable: what shall this poor helpless thing do? Trust in God? him he hath offended, and he fears him as an enemy; and, God knows, if we look only on ourselves, and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he rely on princes? God help poor kings; they rely on their subjects, they fight with their swords, levy force with their money, consult with their counsels, hear with their ears, and are

strong only in their union, and many times they use all these things against them; but, however, they can do nothing without them while they live, and yet if ever they can die, they are not to be trusted to. Now kings and princes die so sadly and notoriously, that it was used for a proverb in holy Scripture, 'Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.' Whom then shall we trust in? In our friend? Poor man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten: he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself: he gives thee counsel to choose a wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to choose his religion: he counsels thee to abstain from a duel, and yet slays his own soul with drinking: like a person void of all understanding, he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very careless of his own; for he does highly despise to betray or to be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is false to God; and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune, but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we rely on our patron, like the Roman clients, who waited hourly on their persons, and daily on their baskets, and nightly on their lusts, and married their friendships, and contracted also their hatred and quarrels? this is a confidence will deceive us. For they may lay us by, justly or unjustly; they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change; or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burdensome in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer than their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance: and, indeed, generally it is so, in all the instances

of men. We have a friend that is wise ; but I need not his counsel, but his meat : or my patron is bountiful in his largesses ; but I am troubled with a sad spirit ; and money and presents do me no more ease than perfumes do to a broken arm. We seek life of a physician that dies, and go to him for health who cannot cure his own breath or gout ; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, impatient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandering and wild, without counsel and without remedy. At last, after the infatuating and deceiving all our confidences without, we have nothing left us but to return home, and dwell within ourselves : for we have a sufficient stock of self-love, that we may be confident of our own affections, we may trust ourselves surely ; for what we want in skill we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances ; and no man understands my own case so well as I do myself, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for myself ; for I am most concerned not to abuse myself ; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may best rely on myself. Alas ! and God help us ! we shall find it to be no such matter : for we neither love ourselves well, nor understand our own case ; we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most false, perfidious creatures to ourselves in the whole world : even the ‘heart of man,’ a man’s own heart, ‘is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can know it ?’ and who can choose but know it ?

And there is no greater argument of the deceitfulness of our hearts than this, that no man can

know it all; it cozens us in the very number of its cozenage. But yet we can reduce it all to two heads. We say concerning a false man, Trust him not, for he will deceive you; and we say concerning a weak and broken staff, Lean not on it, for that will also deceive you. The man deceives because he is false, and the staff because it is weak, and the heart because it is both. So that it is 'deceitful above all things:' that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things, but in other things, where it can, it is false and 'desperately wicked.' The first sort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the second is its iniquity; and that is the worse calamity of the two.

I. The heart is deceitful in its strength; and when we have the growth of a man, we have the weaknesses of a child: nay, more yet, and it is a sad consideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new converts, which are like to the great emissions of lightning, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoke, from smoke to embers, and from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the fantastic images of death. And the primitive church were zealous in their religion up to the degree of cherubims, and would run as greedily to the sword of the hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a Christian spirit, even to the receiving of the holy sacrament. A man would think it reasonable that the first infancy of Christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remiss, gentle, and inactive; and

that, according as the object or evidence of faith grew, which in every age hath a great degree of argument superadded to its confirmation, so should the habit also and the grace; the longer it lasts, and the more objections it runs through, it still should show a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of miracles, still the Christian should grow more certain in his faith, more refreshed in his hope, and warm in his charity; the very nature of these graces increasing and swelling on the very nourishment of experience, and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet, because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But, indeed, it is because we put on strange fire, and put out the fire on our hearths by letting in a glaring sunbeam, the fire of lust, or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fire of God, and suppress the sweet cloud of incense. The heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of itself; it cannot command its own attentions to a prayer of ten lines long, but, before its end, it shall wander after something that is to no purpose; and no wonder, then, that it grows weary of a holy religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual weakness, and the falseness of our hearts in the matters of religion, than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and

frustrate an opportunity; and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no weariness of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a blessing, and receiving it; nothing but doing ourselves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest person and greatest King of the world: and that we should be unwilling to do this, so unable to continue in it, so backward to return to it, so without gust and relish in the doing it, can have no visible reason in the nature of the thing, but something within us, a strange sickness in the heart, a spiritual nauseating or loathing of manna, something that hath no name; but we are sure it comes from a weak, a faint, and false heart.

And yet this weak heart is strong in passions, violent in desires, irresistible in its appetites, impatient in its lust, furious in anger: here are strengths enough, one should think. But so have I seen a man in a fever, sick and distempered, unable to walk, less able to speak sense, or to do an act of counsel; and yet, when his fever had boiled up to a delirium, he was strong enough to beat his nursekeeper and his doctor too, and to resist the loving violence of all his friends, who would fain bind him down to reason and his bed; and yet we still say, he is weak, and sick to death. For these strengths of madness are not health, but furiousness and disease.¹ "It is weakness another way." And so are the strengths of a man's heart: they are fetters and manacles; strong, but they are the cordage of imprisonment; so strong, that the heart is not able to stir. And yet it cannot but be a huge sadness, that the heart shall

¹ Θέλω γάρ εἶναι τόνους ἐν σώματι, ἀλλ' ὡς ὑγιαίνουντι, ὡς ἀθλοῦντι οὐκ εἰσὶ τόνοι, ἀλλὰ ἀτονία ἕτερον τρόπον.—
Arrian.

pursue a temporal interest with wit and diligence, and an unwearied industry; and shall not have strength enough, in a matter that concerns its eternal interest, to answer one objection, to resist one assault, to defeat one art of the devil; but shall certainly and infallibly fall, whenever it is tempted to a pleasure.

This, if it be examined, will prove to be a deceit, indeed, a pretence, rather than true on a just cause; that is, it is not a natural, but a moral and a vicious weakness; and we may try it in one or two familiar instances. One of the great strengths, shall I call it? or weaknesses of the heart, is,—that it is strong, violent and passionate in its lusts, and weak and deceitful to resist any. Tell the tempted person, that if he act his lust, he dishonours his body, makes himself a servant to folly, and one flesh with a harlot; he ‘defiles the temples of God,’ and him that defiles a temple, ‘will God destroy:’ tell him, that the angels, who love to be present in the nastiness and filth of prisons, that they may comfort and assist chaste souls and holy persons there abiding, yet they are impatient to behold or come near the filthiness of a lustful person: tell him, that this sin is so ugly that the devils, who are spirits, yet they delight to counterfeit the acting of this crime, and descend unto the daughters or sons of men, that they may rather lose their natures, than not to help to set a lust forward; tell them these and ten thousand things more, you move them no more than if you should read one of Tully’s Orations to a mule: for the truth is, they have no power to resist it, much less to master it; their heart fails them when they meet their mistress; and they are driven like a fool to

the stocks, or a bull to the slaughter-house. And yet their heart deceives them ; not because it cannot resist the temptation, but because it will not go about it : for it is certain, the heart can, if it list. For let a boy enter into your chamber of pleasure, and discover your folly, either your lust disbands, or your shame hides it ; you will not, you dare not, do it before a stranger-boy : and yet, that you dare do it before the eyes of the all-seeing God is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence, and the falseness of your heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsel as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of temperance as impossible : try this once ; abstain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No ? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt him with twenty pounds, and he shall fast from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholesome meat. And if chastity and temperance be so easy that a man may be brought to either of them with so ready and easy instruments, let us not suffer our heart to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences, and the strength of its desires ; for we do more for a boy than for God, and for twenty pounds than heaven itself.

But thus it is in every thing else : take a heretic, a rebel, a person that hath an ill cause to manage ; what he wants in the strength of his reason, he shall make it up with diligence ; and a person that hath right on his side, is cold, indiligent, lazy, and inactive, trusting that the goodness of his cause will do it alone. But so wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous in a bad matter, and others

are remiss in a good; and the same person shall be very industrious always, when he hath least reason so to be. That is the first particular, the heart is deceitful in the managing of its natural strengths; it is naturally and physically strong, but morally weak and impotent.

2. The heart of man is deceitful in making judgment concerning its own acts. It does not know when it is pleased or displeased; it is peevish and trifling; it would and it would not; and it is in many cases impossible to know whether a man's heart desires such a thing or not. St. Ambrose hath an odd saying, "It is easier to find a man that lived innocently, than one that hath truly repented him,"¹ with a grief and care great according to the merit of his sins. Now, suppose a man that hath spent his younger years in vanity and folly, and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober counsel; this man will find his heart so false, so subtle and fugitive, so secret and undiscernible, that it will be very hard to discern whether he repents or no. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore repents; alas! he so hates it, that he dares not, if he be wise, tempt himself with an opportunity to act it: for in the midst of that which he calls hatred, he hath so much love left for it, that if the sin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kisses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why else should it be necessary for us to pray, that 'we be not led into temptation,' but because we hate the

¹ "Facilius inveneris innocentem, quam qui poenitentiam digne egerit."

sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and yet follow it; we are angry at ourselves, and yet cannot be without it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant. And when we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord on our sins, yet we are kind-hearted, and spare the Agag, the reigning sin, the splendid temptation; we have some kindnesses left towards it.

These are but ill signs. How then shall I know, by some infallible token, that I am a true penitent? What and if I weep for my sins? will you not then give me leave to conclude my heart right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so. But there are some friends that weep at parting; and is not thy weeping a sorrow of affection? It is a sad thing to part with our long companion. Or, it may be, thou weepest because thou wouldst have a sign to cozen thyself withal: for some men are more desirous to have a sign, than the thing signified; they would do something to show their repentance, that themselves may believe themselves to be penitents, having no reason from within to believe so. And I have seen some persons weep heartily for the loss of sixpence, or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident; and they that do so, cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be, when they weep; they are vexed for the dirtying of their linen, or some such trifle, for which the least passion is too big an expense. So that a man cannot tell his own heart by his tears, or the truth of his repentance by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? Shall we suppose a man to pray against his sin? So did St. Austin; when, in his youth, he was

tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly desired that God would not hear him: for here the heart is cunning to deceive itself. For, no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sense or degree listen to the temptation; for to pray against a sin, is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any love or kindness to it. We pray against it, and yet do it; and then pray again, and do it again: and we desire it, and yet pray against the desires; and that is almost a contradiction. Now, because no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or choose against his own desires, it is plain, that we cannot know whether we mean what we say when we pray against sin, but by the event: if we never act it, never entertain it, always resist it, ever fight against it, and finally do prevail; then, at length, we may judge our own heart to have meant honestly in that one particular.

Nay, our heart is so deceitful in this matter of repentance, that the masters of spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory arts and stratagems to secure the duty; and we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn; to be sorrowful, because we are not sorrowful. Now, if we be sorrowful in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? Is our heart so secret to ourselves? But if we be not sorrowful in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it, in the second period? For we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second, or reflex act of sorrow, as of the first and direct action: and, therefore, we may also as well be sorrowful the third time, for want of the just measure or hearty meaning of the second sorrow,

as be sorrowful the second time, for want of true sorrow at the first; and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this artifice, if we be not certain of our natural and hearty passion in our direct and first apprehensions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make no question of their salvation, being confident only because they are confident; and they are so because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extremely timorous and fearful. How many persons are there in the world, that say they are sure of their salvation, and yet they dare not die? And if any man pretends that he is now sure he shall be saved, and that he cannot fall away from grace; there is no better way to confute him, than by advising him to send for the surgeon, and bleed to death. For what would hinder him? not the sin; for it cannot take him from God's favour: not the change of his condition; for he says, he is sure to go to a better: why does he not then say *κέκρικα*, like the Roman gallants when they "decreed" to die. The reason is plainly this; they say they are confident, and yet are extremely timorous; they profess to believe that doctrine, and yet dare not trust it; nay, they think they believe, but they do not: so false is a man's heart, so deceived in its own acts, so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The heart is deceitful in its own resolutions and purposes: for many times men make their resolutions only in their understanding, not in their will; they resolve it fitting to be done, not decree that they will do it; and instead of beginning to be reconciled to God by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far

only as to be convinced, and apt to be condemned by their own sentence.

But suppose our resolutions advanced further, and that our will and choices also are determined; see how our hearts deceive us.

1. We resolve against those sins that please us not, or where temptation is not present, and think, by an over-acted zeal against some sins, to give an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be drunk; the company, or the discourse, or the pleasure of madness, or an easy nature and a thirsty soul,—something is amiss, that cannot be helped: but they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or, it may be, they must satisfy a beastly lust; but they will not be drunk for all the world; and hope, by their temperance, to commute for their want of chastity. But they attend not the craft of their secret enemy, their heart; for it is not love of the virtue; if it were, they would love virtue in all its instances;¹ for chastity is as much a virtue as temperance, and God hates lust as much as he hates drunkenness. But this sin is against my health, or it may be, it is against my lust; it makes me impotent and yet impatient; full of desire, and empty of strength. Or else I do an act of prayer, lest my conscience become unquiet, while it is not satisfied, or cozened with some intervals of religion: I shall think myself a damned wretch if I do nothing for my soul; but if I do, I shall call the one sin that remains, nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my

¹ "Virtutem si unam amiseris (etsi amitti virtus non potest, sed si unam confessus fueris te non habere) nullam te esse habiturum an nescio?"—Cicer. Tusc. Quæst. ii. 13. Davis.

prayer is not my religion, but my peace, and my pretence, and my fallacy.

2. We resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly. I will not be drunk in the streets; but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober: or, if I be overtaken, it shall be in civil and genteel company. Or it may be not so much: I will leave my intemperance and my lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure; I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and, by a fiction of imagination, will represent it present, and so be satisfied with a little effeminacy or fantastic pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you; as if any man can be faithful in much, that is faithless in a little. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its picture, and wears its favour, and delights in the fancy of it, even with the same desire as a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him: but certainly her staring all day on his picture, and weeping over his robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signs that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with, their sins.

3. We resolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it aside as long as the temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world, that against every communion renew their vows of holy living! men that for twenty, for thirty years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily

act; and sure enough they did believe themselves. And yet if a man had daily promised us a courtesy, and failed us but ten times, when it was in his power to have done it, we should think we had reason never to believe him more. And can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our hearts, which they have falsified so many hundred times? We resolve against a religious time, because then it is the custom of men, and the guise of the religion: or we resolve when we are in a great danger; and then we promise any thing, possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us; we only care to remove the present pressure; and when that is over, and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferences: or else we cannot look a temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. Epictetus tells of a gentleman returning from banishment, who, in his journey towards home, called at his house, told a sad story of an imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent, he was resolved for the future to live philosophically, and entertain no business, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the court, not to salute Cæsar with ambitious attendances, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly, when nature or necessity called him. It may be, this man believed himself, but Epictetus did not. And he had reason: for "letters from Cæsar meet him" at the doors, and invited him to court; and he forgot all his promises, which were warm on his lips; and grew pompous, secular, and ambitious, and gave

the gods thanks for his preferment.¹ Thus many men leave the world, when their fortune hath left them; and they are severe and philosophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return; but let a prosperous sunshine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation: their own false heart is enough; they are like 'Ephraim in the day of battle, starting aside like a broken bow.'

4. The heart is false, deceiving and deceived, in its intentions and designs. A man hears the precepts of God enjoining us to give alms of all we possess; he readily obeys with much cheerfulness and alacrity, and his charity, like a fair-spreading tree, looks beauteously: but there is a canker at the heart; the man blows a trumpet to call the poor together, and hopes the neighbourhood will take notice of his bounty. Nay, he gives alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes by some accident or other to be praised both for his charity and humility. And if, by chance, the fame of his alms come abroad, it is but his duty to 'let his light so shine before men,' that God may be 'glorified,' and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified. But then, to distinguish the intention of our heart in this instance, and to seek God's glory in a particular, which will also conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence to stick to the heart, no reflection on ourselves, or no complacency and delight in popular noises, is the nicety of abstraction, and requires an angel to do it. Some

¹ Epict. Upton tom. i. p. 60.

men are so kind-hearted, so true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans, and receive his last breath, and close his eyes. And if this be done with honest intention, it is well : but there are some that do so, and yet are vultures and harpies ; they watch for the carcass, and prey on a legacy. A man with a true story may be malicious to his enemy, and by doing himself right may also do him wrong : and so false is the heart of man, so clancular¹ and contradictory are its actions and intentions, that some men pursue virtue with great earnestness, and yet cannot with patience look on it in another : it is beauty in themselves, and deformity in the other. Is it not plain, that not the virtue, but its reputation, is the thing that is pursued ? And yet, if you tell the man so, he thinks he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment, when, from fear of punishment, we are brought to fear God ? And yet the difference must be distinguishable in new converts and old disciples ; and our fear of punishment must so often change its circumstances, that it must be at last a fear to offend out of pure love, and must have no formality left to distinguish it from charity. It is easy to distinguish these things in precepts, and to make the separation in the schools ; the head can do it easily, and the tongue can do it ; but when the heart comes to separate alms from charity, God's glory from human praise, fear from fear, and sincerity from hypocrisy, it does so intricate the questions, and confound the ends, and blind and entangle circumstances, that a man hath

¹ Close, secret. —ED.

reason to doubt that his very best actions are sullied with some unhandsome excrescency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but always to be imperfect.

Here, a man would think, were enough to abate our confidence, and the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand on his guard, and to keep a strict watch on his own heart, as on his greatest enemy from without; it was St. Austin's prayer; "Lord keep me; Lord, deliver me from myself."¹ If God will keep a man that he be not *felo de se*, that "he lay no violent hands on himself," it is certain nothing else can do him mischief, as Agamemnon said, "Neither Jupiter, nor destinies, nor the furies,"² but it is a man's self, that does him the mischief. The devil can but tempt, and offer a dagger at the heart; unless our hands thrust it home, the devil can do nothing, but what may turn to our advantage. And in this sense we are to understand the two seeming contradictories in Scripture: 'Pray that ye enter not into temptation,' said our blessed Saviour; and, 'Count it all joy when you enter into divers temptations,' said one of Christ's disciples. The case is easy. When God suffers us to be tempted, he means it but as a trial of our faith, as the exercise of our virtues, as the opportunity of reward; and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy; since the 'trial of our faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience causeth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed:' but yet, for all this, 'pray against temptations:' for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blind men do their clubs, neither

¹ Custodi, libera me de meipso, Deus.

² Οὐτε Ζεὺς, οὐτε μοῖρα, οὐτε Ἑρινὺς.

distinguish person nor part; they strike the face of their friends as soon as the back of the enemy; our hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty, and give advantages to the devil. He that uses a temptation thus, hath reason to pray against it: and yet our hearts do all this and a thousand times more: so that we may engrave on our hearts the epitaph which was digged into Thyestes' grave-stone:

"Nolite, hospites, ad me adire; illico isthic,
Ne contagio mea bonis umbrave obsit:
Meo tanta vis sceleris in corpore hæret."¹

There is so much falseness and iniquity in man's heart, that it defiles all the members: it makes the eyes lustful, and the tongue slanderous; it fills the head with mischief, and the feet with blood, and the hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternal misery. But this is but the beginning of those throes and damnable impieties which proceed out of the heart of man, and defile the whole constitution. I have yet told but the weaknesses of the heart; I shall the next time tell you the iniquities, those inherent devils which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make it 'desperately wicked,' that is, wicked beyond all expression.

¹ Cicero de Orat. iii. c. 41.

PART II.

"It is the beginning of wisdom to know a man's own weaknesses and failings, in things of greatest necessity :"¹ and we have here so many objects to furnish out this knowledge, that we find it with the longest and latest, before it be obtained. A man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is well stricken in death. A man's heart at first being like a plain table; unspotted, indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it: as soon as ever we ripen towards the imperfect uses of our reason, we write on this table such crooked characters, such imperfect configurations, so many fooleries, and stain it with so many blots and vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our hearts for a great while: and when education and ripeness, reason and experience, Christian philosophy and the grace of God, have made fair impressions, and written the law in our hearts with the finger of God's Holy Spirit, we blot out this hand-writing of God's ordinances, or mingle it with false principles and interlinings of our own; we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God: either we make the rule uneven, we bribe or abuse our guide, that we may wander with an excuse; or if nothing else will do it, we turn head and profess to go against the laws of God. Our hearts are blind, or our hearts are hardened; for these are two great arguments of the wickedness of our hearts: they do not see, or

¹ Ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας συνναίσθησις τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀσθενείας, καὶ ἀδυναμίας περὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα.—Epict. Arrian.

they will not see, the ways of God; or if they do, they make use of their seeing that they may avoid them.

I. Our hearts are blind, wilfully blind. I need not instance in the ignorance and involuntary nescience of men; though if we speak of the necessary parts of religion, no man is ignorant of them without his own fault: such ignorance is always a direct sin, or the direct punishment of a sin; a sin is either in its bosom, or in its retinue. But the ignorance that I now intend, is a voluntary, chosen, delightful ignorance, taken in on design, even for no other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly. God hath opened all the windows of heaven, and sent the Sun of Righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath discovered the abysses of his own wisdom, made the second person in the Trinity to be the doctor and preacher of his sentences and secrets, and the third person to be his amanuensis or scribe, and our hearts to be the book in which the doctrine is written, and miracles and prophecies to be its arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it: and those leaves contain within their folds all that excellent morality, which right reason picked up after the shipwreck of nature, and all those wise sayings which singly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of revelation. So that now the wisdom of God hath made every man's heart to be the true veronica¹, in which he hath

¹ The features of a face, said to be the likeness of Christ, miraculously impressed upon a handkerchief, are so called by the Roman Catholics.—ED.

imprinted his own lineaments so perfectly, that we may dress ourselves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our elder brother; that we may be pure as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the Holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wisdom and holiness. This hath God done for us; and see what we do for him. We stand in our own light, and quench God's; we love darkness more than light, and entertain ourselves accordingly. For how many of us are there, that understand nothing of the ways of God; that know no more of the laws of Jesus Christ than is remaining on them since they learned the children's catechism? But, amongst a thousand, how many can explicate and unfold for his own practice the ten commandments, and how many sorts of sins are there forbidden? which therefore pass into action, and never pass under the scrutinies of repentance, because they know not that they are sins. Are there not very many, who know not the particular duties of meekness, and never consider concerning long-suffering? and if you talk to them of growth in grace, or the Spirit of obsequiation, or the melancholic lectures of the cross, and imitation of and conformity to Christ's sufferings, or adherences to God, or rejoicing in him, or not quenching the Spirit; you are too deep-learned for them. And yet these are duties set down plainly for our practice, necessary to be acted in order to our salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fulness of the Spirit: in the mean time we understand not many parts of our duty. We inquire into something that may make us talk, or be talked of, or that we may trouble a church, or disturb the peace of minds; but in things

that concern holy living, and that wisdom of God whereby we are wise unto salvation, never was any age of Christendom more ignorant than we. For if we did not wink hard, we must needs see, that obedience to supreme powers, denying of ourselves, humility, peacefulness, and charity, are written in such capital text letters, that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the understanding, it were not to be imagined that any man should bring the thirteenth chapter to the Romans to prove the lawfulness of taking up arms against our rulers: but so we may abuse ourselves at noon, and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there have been a sort of witty men, that maintained that snow was hot. I wonder not at the problem: but that a man should believe his paradox, and should let eternity go away with the fallacy, and rather lose heaven than leave his foolish argument, is a sign that wilfulness and the deceiving heart is the sophister, and the great ingredient into our deception.

But, that I may be more particular; the heart of man uses devices that it may be ignorant.

1. We are impatient of honest and severe reproof; and order the circumstances of our persons and addresses, that we shall never come to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear his curate tell him, that he is covetous, or that he is proud? It is calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his head, and relates to his person; and yet if he speak only in general, every man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet, if our physician tell us, You look well, sir, but a fever lurks in your spirits: drink julaps and

abstain from flesh ;¹—no man thinks it a shame or calumny to be told so : but when we are told that our liver is inflamed with lust or anger, that our heart is vexed with envy, that our eyes roll with wantonness ; and though we think all is well, yet we are sick, sick unto death, and near to a sad and fatal sentence ; we shall think that man that tells us so, is impudent or uncharitable ; and yet he hath done him no more injury than a deformed man receives daily from his looking-glass, which if he shall dash against the wall, because it shows him his face just as it is, his face is not so ugly as his manners. And yet our heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains, that, like the elephant, it tramples in the pure streams, and first troubles them, then stoops and drinks, when he can least see his huge deformity.

2. In order to this, we heap up teachers of our own, and they guide us, not whither, but which way, they please : for we are curious to go our own way, and careless of our hospital or inn at night. A fair way, and a merry company, and a pleasant easy guide, will entice us into the enemy's quarters ; and such guides we cannot want : " If we have a mind to be wicked, we shall want no prompters :"² and false teachers, at first creeping in unawares, have now so filled the pavement of the church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground but you tread on a snake. Cicero (l. 7. ad Atticum) undertakes to bargain with them that kept the Sibyls' books, that for a sum of money they should expound to him what he please ; and, to be sure, " they shall declare against the government of kings, and

¹ Ἀσίγησον, σήμερον ὕδωρ πίε.

² Improbitali occasio nunquam defuit.

say, that the gods will endure any thing rather than monarchy in their beloved republic."¹ And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews: 'The prophets prophesy lies, and my people love to have it so: and what will the end of these things be?'—even the same that Cicero complained of:² men shall have what religion they please, and God shall be entitled to all the quarrels of covetous and ambitious persons; *καὶ Πυθίαν φιλιππιζειν*, as Demosthenes wittily complained of the oracle; an answer shall be drawn of Scripture to countenance the design, and God made the rebel against his own ordinances. And then we are zealous for the Lord God of hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall set all the rest on working? The heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of reason, then remove the land-mark, and dig down the causeways, and then either hire a blind guide, or make him so: and all these arts to get ignorance, that they may secure impiety. At first, man lost his innocence only in hope to get a little knowledge; and ever since then, lest knowledge should discover his error, and make him return to innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins, or discompose our secular designs. And, as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise religion, and sent his Spirit to give the gift of faith to his church, that, on the foundation of faith, he might build a holy life; now our hearts love to re-

¹ Ut quidvis potius quam regem proferrent.

² Ad opinionem imperatorum fictas esse religiones.—De Divinat. l. 2.

tire into blindness, and sneak under covert of false principles, and run to a cheap religion, and an inactive discipline, and make a faith of our own, that we may build on it ease, and ambition, and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a mind to; scarce once in seven years denying a strong and an unruly appetite on the interest of a just conscience and holy religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety, so certain arts and apt instruments for the devil, that it does his work entirely, and produces an infallible damnation.

3. But the heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of ignorance; and that is, incogitancy or inconsideration. For there is wrought on the spirits of many men great impressions by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by human laws, and the customs and severities of sober persons, and the fears of religion, and the awfulness of a reverend man, and the several arguments and endearments of virtue; and it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of reason, and religion, and arguments, and reverence, and modesty, and fear; but men are forced from their sin by the violence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman gentleman kept off a whole band of soldiers who were sent to murder him, and his eloquence was stronger than their anger and design; but, suddenly, a rude trooper rushed on him, who neither had nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat whose music had charmed all his fellows into peace and gentleness. So do we. The grace of God is armour and defence enough against the most violent incursion of the spirits and

the works of darkness; but then we must hear its excellent charms, and consider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to uncleanness, or to an act of oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me, that the pleasure of the sin is transient and vain, unsatisfying and empty; that I shall die, and then I shall wish too late that I had never done it. It tells me, that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me: it represents to me all the joys of heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a sad eternity; and, if I will stay and hear them, ten thousand excellent things besides, fit to be twisted about my understanding for ever. But here the heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but, by a mere wildness of purpose, and rudeness of resolution, ventures at all, and does the thing, not because it thinks it fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or no; it is enough that it pleases a pleasant appetite. And if such incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men,—first by resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit, then by quenching him,—we shall find the consequence to be, first an indifferency, then a dulness, then a lethargy, then a direct hating the ways of God; and it commonly ends in a wretchlessness of spirit, to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall pass hence, not like the shadow, but like the dog, that departeth without sense, or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment, in the considerations of eternity: and

it is but just, when we will not hear our King speak and plead, not to save himself, but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency, and salvation, to prevent our ruin, and our intolerable calamity. Certainly we are much in love with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back, and 'stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely.'

Nay, further yet, we suffer the arguments of religion to have so little impression on our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of childhood, or the problems of uncertain philosophy. A man talks of religion but as of a dream, and from thence he awakens into the businesses of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect action and full resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them: but when he falls asleep again, or is taken from the scene of his own employment and choice, then he dreams again, and religion makes such impressions as is the conversation of a dreamer, and he acts accordingly. Theocritus tells of a fisherman that dreamed he had taken *χρύσεον ἰχθύν*, "a fish of gold;"¹ on which being overjoyed, he made a vow that he would never fish more: but when he waked, he soon declared his vow to be null, because he found his golden fish was escaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purposes of religion: sometimes, in a good mood, we seem to see heaven opened, and all the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low

¹ Idyl. xxi. 52.

affections of the world, and the impure adherences of sin: but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the inclinations and habitual desires of our false hearts, those other desires and fine considerations disband, and the resolutions, taken in that pious fit, melt into indifference and old customs. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who, having used to put his trust in dreams, one night dreamed that all dreams were vain: for he considered, if so, then this was vain, and the dreams might be true for all this: but if they might be true, then this dream might be so on equal reason: and then dreams were vain, because this dream, which told him so, was true; and so round again. In the same circle runs the heart of man: all his cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especial use of this, that that thought which thinks so, that is vain; and if that be vain, then his other thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be real, and relied on. And so do we: those religious thoughts which are sent into us to condemn and disrepute the thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the only dreams: and so all those instruments which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of impiety, are rendered ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or (which happens most commonly) by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, that we are ignorant of the things of God. We make religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole year; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of holy living; we deduce religion to the believing of a few articles, and doing nothing that is considerable; we pray seldom, and then but very coldly and indif-

ferently; we communicate not so often as the sun salutes both the tropics; we profess Christ, but dare not die for him; we are factious for a religion, and will not live according to its precepts; we call ourselves Christians, and love to be ignorant of many of the laws of Christ, lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a holy life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a furious inconsiderate person, running after the wildfires of the night, over rivers, and rocks, and precipices, without sun or star, or angel or man, to guide him; all that, and ten thousand times worse, may you suppose to be the certain lot of him who gives himself up to the conduct of a passionate, blind heart; whom no fire can warm, and no sun can enlighten; who hates light, and loves to dwell in the region of darkness. That is the first general mischief of the heart; it is possessed with blindness, wilful and voluntary.

II. But the heart is hard too. Not only folly, but mischief also is bound up in the heart of man. If God strives to soften it with sorrow and sad accidents, it is like an ox, it grows callous and hard. Such a heart was Pharaoh's. When God makes the clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the clouds, and, like the malcontents in Galba's time, "we seem sad and troubled, but it is doggedness and murmur:"¹ or else, if our fears be pregnant, and the heart yielding, it sinks low into pusillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so impatient in a sadness, that God is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet, when the sun shines on us, our hearts are hardened with that too; and God

¹ *Tristitiam simulamus, contumaciæ propiores.*

seems to be at a loss, as if he knew not what to do to us. War undoes us, and makes us violent; peace undoes us, and makes us wanton; prosperity makes us proud; adversity renders us impatient; plenty dissolves us and makes us tyrants; want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious. "No fortune can save that city to whom neither peace nor war can do advantage."¹ And what is there left for God to mollify our hearts, whose temper is like both to wax and dirt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens; and contradictory accidents produce no change, save that the heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of Providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

1. The heart of man is strangely proud. If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish ourselves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not; or envious, and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then *Vox populi vox Dei*, "Fame is the voice of God:" if we be praised but by few, then *Salis unus, salis nullus*; we cry, "These are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the people:" but if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of nobody, and think well only of ourselves. And then we have such beggarly arts, such tricks, to cheat for praise. We inquire after our faults and failings, only to be told we have none, but did excellently; and

¹ Πῶς οὖν τις ἂν σώσειε τοιαύτην πόλιν,
ἢ μήτε χλαῖνα, μήτε σισύρα ξυμφέροι.
Aristoph. Ran.

then we are pleased : we rail on our actions, only to be chidden for so doing ; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of ourselves, which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, humility itself makes us proud : so false, so base, is the heart of man. For humility is so noble a virtue, that even pride itself puts on its upper garment : and we do like those who cannot endure to look on an ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigy : and *Æsop's* picture was sold for two talents, when himself was made a slave at the price of two philippics. And because humility makes a man to be honoured, therefore we imitate all its garbs and postures, its civilities and silence, its modesties and condescensions. And, to prove that we are extremely proud, in the midst of all this pageantry, we should be extremely angry at any man that should say we are proud ; and that is a sure sign we are so. And in the midst of all our arts to seem humble, we use devices to bring ourselves into talk ; we thrust ourselves into company, we listen at doors, and, like the greatbeards in Rome that pretended philosophy and strict life, "we walk by the obelisk,"¹ and meditate in piazzas, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may cry out, Ω μεγάλην φιλοσόφου ! Behold ! there goes an excellent man ! He is very prudent, or very learned, or a charitable person, or good housekeeper, or at least very humble.

¹ Ὁ βελίσκον καταπιόντες περιπατοῦμεν.—*Arrian, Upton tom. i. p. 60.*

2. The heart of man is deeply in love with wickedness, and with nothing else; against not only the laws of God, but against his own reason, its own interest, and its own securities. For is it imaginable that a man who knows the laws of God, the rewards of virtue, the cursed and horrid effects of sin; that knows, and considers, and deeply sighs at the thought of the intolerable pains of hell; that knows the joys of heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for, and yet he certainly believes that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither; is it, I say, imaginable that this man should, for a transient action, forfeit all this hope, and certainly and knowingly incur all that calamity? Yea, but the sin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and blood, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; and the discourses of religion are concerning things spiritual, separate and apt for spirits, angels, and souls departed. To take off this also, we will suppose the man to consider and really to believe that the pleasure of the sin is sudden, vain, empty, and transient; that it leaves bitterness on the tongue, before it is descended into the bowels; that there it is poison, and 'makes the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot;' that he remembers and actually considers, that as soon as the moment of sin is past, he shall have an intolerable conscience, and does, at the instant, compare moments with eternity, and with horror remembers that the very next minute he is as miserable a man as is in the world; yet that this man should sin. Nay, suppose the sin to have no pleasure at all, such as is the sin of swearing; nay, suppose it to have pain

in it, such as is the sin of envy, which never can have pleasure in its actions, but much torment and consumption of the very heart : what should make this man sin so for nothing, so against himself, so against all reason and religion, and interest, without pleasure, for no reward ? Here the heart betrays itself to be ‘ desperately wicked.’ What man can give a reasonable account of such a man, who, to prosecute his revenge, will do himself an injury, that he may do a less to him that troubles him ? Such a man hath given me ill language : “ My head aches not for his language, nor hath he broken my thigh, nor carried away my land ;”¹ but yet this man must be requited.—Well, suppose that ; but then let it be proportionably : you are undone ; let him not be so.—Oh, yes ; for else my revenge triumphs not.—Well, if you do, yet remember he will defend himself, or the law will right him ; at least, do not do wrong to yourself by doing him wrong ; this were but prudence and self-interest. And yet we see that the heart of some men hath betrayed them to such furiousness of appetite, as to make them willing to die that their enemy may be buried in the same ruins. Jovius Pontanus tells of an Italian slave, I think, who being enraged against his lord, watched his absence from home, and the employment and inadvertency of his fellow-servants : he locked the doors, and secured himself for awhile, and ravished his lady ; then took her three sons up to the battlements of the house, and, at the return of his lord, threw one down to him on the pavement, and then a second, to rend the heart of their sad

¹ Οὔτε τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀλγεί, οὔτε τὸν ὀφθαλμον, οὔτε τὸν ἰσχίον, οὔτε τὸν ἀγρὸν ἀπολλύει.

father, seeing them weltering in their blood and brains. The lord begged for his third, and now his only son, promising pardon and liberty if he would spare his life. The slave seemed to bend a little, and, on condition his lord would cut off his own nose, he would spare his son. The sad father did so, being willing to suffer any thing rather than the loss of that child. But as soon as he saw his lord all bloody with his wound, he threw the third son and himself down together on the pavement. The story is sad enough, and needs no lustre and advantages of sorrow to represent it; but if a man sets himself down, and considers sadly, he cannot easily tell on what sufficient inducement, or what principle, the slave should so certainly, so horridly, so presently, and then so eternally ruin himself. What could he propound to himself as a recompence to his own so immediate tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him: we must confess our ignorance, and say, that 'the heart of man is desperately wicked;' and that is the truth in general, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.

For when the heart of man is bound up by the grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by angels, tended by those nursekeepers of the soul, it is not easy for a man to wander; and the evil of his heart is but like the ferity and wildness of lions' whelps: but when once we have broken the edge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the licentiousness of an ungoverned age, it is wonderful to observe what a great inundation of mischief, in a very short time, will overflow all the banks of reason and religion. Vice first is pleasing,

then it grows easy, then delightful, then frequent, then habitual, then confirmed; then the man is impenitent, then he is obstinate, then he resolves never to repent, and then he is damned. And by that time he is come half-way in this progress, he confutes the philosophy of the old moralists; for they, not knowing the vileness of man's heart, not considering its desperate, amazing impiety, knew no other degree of wickedness but this, that men preferred sense before reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporal before an intellectual and eternal good: but they always concluded, that the will of man must of necessity follow the last dictate of the understanding, declaring an object to be good, in one sense or other. Happy men they were that were so innocent, that knew no pure and perfect malice, and lived in an age in which it was not easy to confute them. But, besides that now the wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see, by too sad experience, that there are some sins proceeding from the heart of a man, which have nothing but simple and unmingled malice;—actions of mere spite, doing evil because it is evil, sinning without sensual pleasures, sinning with sensual pain, with hazard of our lives, with actual torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and present damnation; sins against the Holy Ghost, open hostilities, and professed enmities against God and all virtue. I can go no further, because there is not in the world, or in the nature of things, a greater evil. And that is the nature and folly of the devil; he tempts men to ruin, and hates God, and only hurts himself and those he tempts, and does himself no pleasure, and some say he increases his own accidental torment.

Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me to represent the falseness and baseness of the heart. 1. We are false ourselves, and dare not trust God. 2. We love to be deceived, and are angry if we be told so. 3. We love to seem virtuous, and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholic and impatient, and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things, and are careless of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures. 7. We believe things, not for their reasons and proper arguments, but as they serve our turns, be they true or false. 8. We long extremely for things that are forbidden us; and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily, when it is taken from us. 9. We love ourselves more than we love God; and yet we eat poisons daily, and feed on toads and vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosom, and will not be brought to quit them; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but virtue, which is most honourable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all means we can to make death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busy in the faults of others, and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown ourselves. 13. We worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of greatness, and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it is, that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of clients run to us as to a pool, which first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make ourselves unsafe by committing wickedness, and then we add more wickedness, to

make us safe and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one courtesy that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain slanderers, and, without choice, spread their calumnies; and we hug flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the abuses, and impieties, and deceptions of the heart, as Chrysippus did the oracular lies of Apollo into a table, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure of watchfulness and religion. Indeed, they are great and many; but the grace of God is greater; and 'if iniquity abounds,' then 'doth grace superabound:' and that is our comfort and our medicine, which we must thus use:—

1. Let us watch our heart at every turn.
2. Deny it all its desires, that do not directly, or by consequence, end in godliness: at no hand be indulgent to its fondnesses and peevish appetites.
3. Let us suspect it as an enemy.
4. Trust not to it in any thing.
5. But beg the grace of God with perpetual and importunate prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils; and that he would throw the salutary wood of the cross, the merits of Christ's death and passion, into these salt waters, and make them healthful and pleasant.

And in order to the managing these advices, and acting the purposes of this prayer, let us strictly follow a rule, and choose a prudent and faithful guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and 'prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight,' apt, and imitable. For without great watchfulness, and earnest devotion, and a prudent guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sense, which

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Plutarch affirmed of a man's body in the natural; that of dead bulls arise bees; from the carcasses of horses, hornets are produced; but the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts, wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions, will produce nothing but issues of hell, and images of the old serpent the devil, for whom is provided the everlasting burning.

SERMON IV.

THE MARRIAGE RING; OR, THE MYSTERIOUS-
NESS AND DUTIES OF MARRIAGE.

EPHESIANS, v. 32, 33.

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

PART I.

THE first blessing God gave to man was society: and that society was a marriage, and that marriage was confederate by God himself, and hallowed by a blessing; and at the same time, and for very many descending ages, not only by the instinct of nature, but by a superadded forwardness (God himself inspiring the desire) the world was most desirous of children, impatient of barrenness; accounting single life a curse, and a childless person hated by God. The world was rich and empty, and able to provide for a more numerous posterity than it had.

—“Εξεις, Νουμήνιε, τέκνα
Χάλκον ἔχων πτωχὸς δ' οὐδὲ τὰ τέκνα φιλεῖ.

You that are rich, Numenius, you may multiply your family; poor men are not so fond of children. But when a family could drive their herds, and set their children on camels, and lead them till they saw a fat soil watered with rivers, and there sit down without paying rent, they thought of nothing but to have great families, that their own relations might swell up to a patriarchate, and their children be enough to possess all the regions that they saw, and their grandchildren become princes, and themselves build cities and call them by the name of a child, and become the fountain of a nation. This was the consequent of the first blessing, 'Increase and multiply.' The next blessing was, the promise of the Messiah; and that also increased in men and women a wonderful desire of marriage: for as soon as God had chosen the family of Abraham to be the blessed line, from whence the world's Redeemer should descend according to the flesh, every of his daughters hoped to have the honour to be his mother, or his grandmother, or something of his kindred; and to be childless in Israel was a sorrow to the Hebrew women great as the slavery of Egypt, or their dishonours in the land of their captivity.

But when the Messiah was come, and the doctrine was published, and his ministers but few, and his disciples were to suffer persecution, and to be of an unsettled dwelling; and the nation of the Jews, in the bosom and society of which the church especially did dwell, were to be scattered and broken all in pieces with fierce calamities, and the world was apt to calumniate and to suspect and dishonour Christians on pretences and unreasonable jealousies,

and that to all these purposes the state of marriage brought many inconveniences; it pleased God in this new creation to inspire into the hearts of his servants a disposition and strong desires to live a single life, lest the state of marriage should in that conjunction of things become an accidental impediment to the dissemination of the Gospel, which called men from a confinement in their domestic charges to travel, and flight, and poverty, and difficulty, and martyrdom: on this necessity the apostles and apostolical men published doctrines, declaring the advantages of single life, not by any commandment of the Lord, but by the spirit of prudence, διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην, 'for the present and then incumbent necessities,' and in order to the advantages which did accrue to the public ministries and private piety. 'There are some (said our blessed Lord) who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven,' that is, for the advantages and the ministry of the Gospel, *non ad vitæ bonæ meritum*; (as St. Austin in the like case;) not that it is a better service of God in itself, but that it is useful to the first circumstances of the Gospel and the infancy of the kingdom, because the unmarried person "is apt to spiritual and ecclesiastical employments:"¹ first ἅγιος, and then ἁγιαζόμενος, "holy in his own person, and then sanctified to public ministries:" and it was also of ease to the Christians themselves, because, as then it was, when they were to flee, and to flee for aught they knew in winter, and they were persecuted to the four winds of heaven; and the nurses and the women with child were to suffer a heavier

¹ Μεριμνᾶν τὰ τοῦ Κυρίου.

load of sorrow, because of the imminent persecutions; and above all, because of the great fatality of ruin on the whole nation of the Jews, well it might be said by St. Paul, 'Such shall have trouble in the flesh;' that is, they that are married shall, and so at that time they had: and therefore it was an act of charity to the Christians to give that counsel: 'I do this to spare you,' and 'I would have you to be without care:' for when the case was altered, and that storm was over, and the first necessities of the Gospel served, and 'the sound was gone out into all nations;' in very many persons it was wholly changed, and not the married but the unmarried had 'trouble in the flesh:' and the state of marriage returned to its first blessing, 'and it was not good for man to be alone.'

But in this first interval, the public necessity and the private zeal mingling together did sometimes overact their love of single life, even to the disparagement of marriage, and to the scandal of religion; which was increased by the occasion of some pious persons renouncing their contract of marriage, not consummate, with believers. For when Flavia Domitilla, being converted by Nereus and Achilleus the eunuchs, refused to marry Aurelianus, to whom she was contracted; if there were not some little envy and too sharp hostility in the eunuchs to a married state, yet Aurelianus thought himself an injured person, and caused St. Clemens, who veiled her, and his spouse both, to die in the quarrel. St. Thecla being converted by St. Paul, grew so in love with virginity, that she leaped back from the marriage of Tamyris, where she was lately engaged. St. Iphigenia denied to marry

king Hyrtacus, and it is said to be done by the advice of St. Matthew. And Susanna, the niece of Dioclesian, refused the love of Maximianus the emperor; and these all had been betrothed; and so did St. Agnes, and St. Felicula, and divers others then and afterward: insomuch, that it was reported among the Gentiles, that the Christians did not only hate all that were not of their persuasion, but were enemies of the chaste laws of marriage; and indeed some that were called Christians were so; 'forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.' On this occasion it grew necessary for the apostle to state the question right, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage, and to snatch the mystery from the hands of zeal and folly, and to place it in Christ's right hand, that all its beauties might appear, and a present convenience might not bring in a false doctrine, and a perpetual sin, and an intolerable mischief. The apostle, therefore, who himself had been a married man, but was now a widower, does explicate the mysteriousness of it, and describes its honours, and adorns it with rules and provisions of religion, that, as it begins with honour, so it may proceed with piety and end with glory.

For although single life hath in it privacy and simplicity of affairs, such solitariness and sorrow, such leisure and inactive circumstances of living, that there are more spaces for religion if men would use them to these purposes; and because it may have in it much religion and prayers, and must have in it a perfect mortification of our strongest appetites, it is therefore a state of great excellency; yet concerning the state of marriage, we are taught from Scripture and the sayings of wise men, great

things are honourable. 'Marriage is honourable in all men;' so is not single life; for in some it is a snare and *πύρωσις*, 'a trouble in the flesh,' a prison of unruly desires, which is attempted daily to be broken. Celibate or single life is never commanded; but in some cases marriage is; and he that burns, sins often if he marries not: he that cannot contain must marry; and he that can contain is not tied to a single life, but may marry and not sin. Marriage was ordained by God, instituted in paradise, was the relief of a natural necessity, and the first blessing from the Lord; he gave to man not a friend, but a wife, that is, a friend and a wife too: (for a good woman is in her soul the same that a man is, and she is a woman only in her body; that she may have the excellency of the one, and the usefulness of the other, and become amiable in both :) it is the seminary of the church, and daily brings forth sons and daughters unto God; it was ministered to by angels, and Raphael waited on a young man that he might have a blessed marriage, and that that marriage might repair two sad families, and bless all their relatives. Our blessed Lord, though he was born of a maiden, yet she was veiled under the cover of marriage, and she was married to a widower; for Joseph, the supposed father of our Lord, had children by a former wife. The first miracle that ever Jesus did, was to do honour to a wedding. Marriage was in the world before sin, and is in all ages of the world the greatest and most effective antidote against sin, in which all the world had perished, if God had not made a remedy: and although sin hath soured marriage, and struck the man's head with cares, and the woman's bed with sorrows in the production of children, yet

these are but throes of life and glory, and 'she shall be saved in child-bearing, if she be found in faith and righteousness.' Marriage is a school and exercise of virtue; and though marriage hath cares, yet the single life hath desires, which are more troublesome and more dangerous, and often end in sin; while the cares are but instances of duty and exercises of piety: and therefore, if single life hath more privacy of devotion, yet marriage hath more necessities and more variety of it, and is an exercise of more graces. In two virtues, celibate or single life may have the advantage of degrees ordinarily and commonly;—that is, in chastity and devotion: but as in some persons this may fail, and it does in very many, and a married man may spend as much time in devotion as any virgins or widows do; yet as in marriage even those virtues of chastity and devotion are exercised; so in other instances, this state hath proper exercises and trials for those graces, for which single life can never be crowned. Here is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents and the charity of relatives; here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre: marriage is the nursery of heaven; the virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to him; but the state of marriage fills up the numbers of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts; it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath more care, but less danger; it is more merry, and more sad; is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys; it lies under more bur-

dens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself. Celibate, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys its king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like to Christ. 'This is a great mystery,' but it is the symbolical and sacramental representation of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Christ descended from his Father's bosom, and contracted his divinity with flesh and blood, and married our nature, and we became a church, the spouse of the Bridegroom, which he cleansed with his blood, and gave her his Holy Spirit for a dowry, and heaven for a jointure; begetting children unto God by the gospel. This spouse he hath joined to himself by an excellent charity, he feeds her at his own table, and lodges her nigh his own heart, provides for all her necessities, relieves her sorrows, determines her doubts, guides her wanderings, he is become her head, and she as a signet on his right hand; he first indeed was betrothed to the synagogue, and had many

children by her, but she forsook her love, and then he married the church of the Gentiles, and by her had a more numerous issue, *atque una domus est omnium filiorum ejus*, "all the children dwell in the same house," and are heirs of the same promises, entitled to the same inheritance. Here is the eternal conjunction, the indissoluble knot, the exceeding love of Christ, the obedience of the spouse, the communicating of goods, the uniting of interests, the fruit of marriage, a celestial generation, a new creature. This is the sacramental mystery, represented by the holy rite of marriage; so that marriage is divine in its institution, sacred in its union, holy in the mystery, sacramental in its signification, honourable in its appellative, religious in its employments: it is advantage to the societies of men, and it is 'holiness to the Lord.' *Dico autem in Christo et ecclesia*, "It must be in Christ and the church."

If this be not observed, marriage loses its mysteriousness: but because it is to effect much of that which it signifies, it concerns all that enter into those golden fetters to see that Christ and his church be in at every of its periods, and that it be entirely conducted and overruled by religion; for so the apostle passes from the sacramental rite to the real duty: 'Nevertheless,' that is, although the former discourse were wholly to explicate the conjunction of Christ and his church by this similitude, yet it hath in it this real duty, 'that the man love his wife, and the wife reverence her husband:' and this is the use we shall now make of it, the particulars of which precept I shall thus dispose:

1. I shall propound the duty as it generally relates to man and wife in conjunction. 2. The duty

and power of the man. 3. The rights and privileges and the duty of the wife.

1. "In Christ and the church:" that begins all, and there is great need it should be so; for they that enter into a state of marriage, cast a die of the greatest contingency, and yet of the greatest interest in the world, next to the last throw for eternity. Life or death, felicity or a lasting sorrow, are in the power of marriage. A woman indeed ventures most, for she hath no sanctuary to retire from an evil husband; she must dwell on her sorrow, and hatch the eggs which her own folly or infelicity hath produced; and she is more under it, because her tormentor hath a warrant of prerogative, and the woman may complain to God, as subjects do of tyrant princes, but otherwise she hath no appeal in the causes of unkindness. And though the man can run from many hours of his sadness, yet he must return to it again; and when he sits among his neighbours, he remembers the objection that lies in his bosom, and he sighs deeply.

The boys, and the pedlars, and the fruiterers, shall tell of this man, when he is carried to his grave, that he lived and died a poor wretched person. The stags in the Greek epigram, whose knees were clogged with frozen snow on the mountains, came down to the brooks of the valleys,¹ "hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream:"² but there the frost overtook them, and bound them fast in ice, till the young herdsmen took them in their stranger-snare. It is the unhappy chance of many men, finding many inconveniences on the mountains of single life, they descend into the valleys of

¹ Χλιῆναι νοτεροῖς νάμασιν ὡκὺ γόνυ.

² Brunck, An. ii. 135.

marriage to refresh their troubles, and there they enter into fetters, and are bound to sorrow by the cords of a man's or woman's peevishness: and the worst of the evil is, they are to thank their own follies; for they fell into the snare by entering an improper way. Christ and the church were no ingredients in their choice: but as the Indian women enter into folly for the price of an elephant, and think their crime warrantable, so do men and women change their liberty for a rich fortune, (like Eriphyle the Argive, "she preferred gold before a good man,"¹) and show themselves to be less than money, by overvaluing that to all the content and wise felicity of their lives; and when they have counted the money and their sorrows together, how willingly would they buy, with the loss of all that money, modesty, or sweet nature, to their relative! The odd thousand pounds would gladly be allowed in good nature and fair manners. As very a fool is he that chooses for beauty principally: *cui sunt eruditi oculi, et stulta mens*, (as one said,) "whose eyes are witty, and their souls sensual;" it is an ill band of affections to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white.

And they can love no longer but until the next ague comes; and they are fond of each other but at the chance of fancy, or the smallpox, or child-bearing, or care, or time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower. But it is the basest of all, when lust is the paranymp, and solicits the suit, and makes the contract, and joins the hands; for this is commonly the effect of the former, according to the Greek proverb; at first, for his fair cheeks and

¹ Η χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήντα.

comely beard, "the beast is taken for a lion, but at last he is turned to a dragon, or a leopard, or a swine."¹ That which is at first beauty on the face, may prove lust in the manners.

"He or she that looks too curiously on the beauty of the body, looks too low, and hath flesh and corruption in his heart, and is judged sensual and earthly in his affections and desires,"² said St. Clement. Begin therefore with God: Christ is the president of marriage, and the Holy Ghost is the fountain of purities and chaste loves, and he joins the hearts; and therefore let our first suit be in the court of heaven, and with designs of piety, or safety, or charity: let no impure spirit defile the virgin purities and 'castifications of the soul, (as St. Peter's phrase is); let all such contracts begin with religious affections.

"We sometimes beg of God for a wife or a child; and he alone knows what the wife shall prove, and by what dispositions and manners, and into what fortune that child shall enter:"³ but we shall not need to fear concerning the event of it if religion, and fair intentions, and prudence manage and conduct it all the way. The preservation of a family, the production of children, the avoiding fornication, the refreshment of our sorrows by the comforts of society; all these are fair ends of mar-

¹ 'Αλλ' ἤτοι πρόωιστα λέων γίνετ' ἡυγένειος
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, καὶ πάρδαλις, ἥδ' ἐ μέγας σῦς.
Od. iv. 456.

² 'Εάν εἰς κάλλος σώματος βλέψῃ τις (ὁ λόγος φησί), καὶ αὐτῷ ἢ σὰρξ εἶναι κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν δόξῃ καλὴ, σαρκικῶς ἰδὼν, καὶ ἀμαρτηκῶς δι' οὐ τεθαύμακε, κρίνεται.

³ Conjugium potimus, partumque uxoris; at illis
Notum, qui pueri, qualisve futura sit uxor.

riage, and hallow the entrance. But in these there is a special order: society was the first designed, 'It is not good for man to be alone:' children was the next, 'Increase and multiply:' but the avoiding fornication came in by the superfætation of the evil accidents of the world. The first makes marriage delectable, the second necessary to the public, the third necessary to the particular; this is for safety, for life, and heaven itself.

The other have in them joy and a portion of immortality: the first makes the man's heart glad; the second is the friend of kingdoms, and cities, and families; and the third is the enemy to hell, and an antidote of the chiefest inlet to damnation: but of all these the noblest end is the multiplying of children. And therefore St. Ignatius, when he had spoken of Elias, and Titus, and Clement, with an honourable mention of their virgin-state, lest he might seem to have lessened the married apostles, at whose feet in Christ's kingdom he thought himself unworthy to sit, he gives this testimony,—“that they may not be disparaged in their great names of holiness and severity, they were secured by not marrying to satisfy their lower appetites, but out of desire of children.”¹ Other considerations, if they be incident and by way of appendage, are also considerable in the accounts of prudence: but when they become principals, they defile the mystery, and make the blessing doubtful: *Amabit sapiens, cupient ceteri*, said Afranius; “Love is a fair inducement, but desire and appetite are rude, and the characterisms of a sensual person;”—*Amare*

¹ Τοῖς γάμοις προσομιλήσαντες οὐχ ὑπὸ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ὑπ' εὐνοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔσχον ἐκείνους.

justi et boni est, cupere impotentis; "To love belongs to a just and a good man; but to lust, or furiously and passionately to desire, is the sign of impotency and an unruly mind."

2. Man and wife are equally concerned to avoid all offences of each other in the beginning of their conversation: every little thing can blast an infant blossom; and the breath of the south can shake the little rings of the vine, when first they begin to curl like the locks of a new-weaned boy; but when by age and consolidation they stiffen into the hardness of a stem, and have, by the warm embraces of the sun and the kisses of heaven, brought forth their clusters, they can endure the storms of the north, and the loud noises of a tempest, and yet never be broken: so are the early unions of an unfixed marriage; watchful and observant, jealous and busy, inquisitive and careful, and apt to take alarm at every unkind word. For infirmities do not manifest themselves in the first scenes, but in the succession of a long society; and it is not chance or weakness when it appears at first, but it is want of love or prudence, or it will be so expounded; and that which appears ill at first, usually affrights the inexperienced man or woman, who makes unequal conjectures, and fancies mighty sorrows by the proportions of the new and early unkindness. It is a very great passion, or a huge folly, or a certain want of love, that cannot preserve the colours and beauties of kindness, so long as public honesty requires a man to wear their sorrows for the death of a friend. Plutarch compares a new marriage to a vessel before the hoops are on: "every thing dissolves their tender compaginations; but when the joints are stiffened and are

tied by a firm compliance and proportioned bending, scarcely can it be dissolved without fire or the violence of iron."¹ After the hearts of the man and the wife are endeared and hardened by a mutual confidence, and experience longer than artifice and pretence can last, there are a great many remembrances, and some things present, that dash all little unkindnesses in pieces. The little boy in the Greek epigram, that was creeping down a precipice, was invited to his safety by the sight of his mother's breast, when nothing else could entice him to return; and the bond of common children, and the sight of her that nurses what is most dear to him, and the endearments of each other in the course of a long society, and the same relation, is an excellent security to reintegrate and to call that love back, which folly and trifling accidents would disturb.

When it is come thus far, it is hard untwisting the knot; but be careful in its first coalition, that there be no rudeness done; for, if there be, it will for ever after be apt to start and to be diseased.

3. Let man and wife be careful to stifle little things,¹ that, as fast as they spring, they be cut down and trod on; for if they be suffered to grow by numbers, they make the spirit peevish, and the society troublesome, and the affections loose and easy by an habitual aversation. Some men are more vexed with a fly than with a wound; and when the gnats disturb our sleep, and the reason is

¹ Κατὰ ἀρχὰς μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς τυχούσης ῥαδίως διασπᾶται προφάσει, χρόνῳ τῶν ἀρμῶν σύμπηξιν λαβόντων, μόγις ὑπὸ πυρός καὶ σιδήρου διαλύεται.

² "Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis."

Juv. vi. 184.

disquieted but not perfectly awakened, it is often seen that he is fuller of trouble, than if, in the daylight of his reason, he were to contest with a potent enemy. In the frequent little accidents of a family, a man's reason cannot always be awake; and when his discourses are imperfect, and a trifling trouble makes him yet more restless, he is soon betrayed to the violence of passion. It is certain that the man or woman are in a state of weakness and folly then, when they can be troubled with a trifling accident; and therefore it is not good to tempt their affections, when they are in that state of danger. In this case the caution is, to subtract fuel from the sudden flame; for stubble, though it be quickly kindled, yet it is as soon extinguished, if it be not blown by a pertinacious breath, or fed with new materials. Add no new provocations to the accident, and do not inflame this, and peace will soon return, and the discontent will pass away soon, as the sparks from the collision of a flint: ever remembering, that discontents, proceeding from daily little things, do breed a secret undiscernible disease, which is more dangerous than a fever proceeding from a discerned notorious surfeit.

4. Let them be sure to abstain from all those things, which by experience and observation they find to be contrary to each other. They that govern elephants, never appear before them in white; and the masters of bulls keep from them all garments of blood and scarlet, as knowing that they will be impatient of civil usages and discipline, when their natures are provoked by their proper antipathies. The ancients, in their martial hieroglyphics, used to depict Mercury standing by Venus

to signify, that by fair language and sweet entreaties, the minds of each other should be united ; and hard by them, *Suadam et Gratias descripserunt*, they would have all deliciousness of manners, compliance and mutual observance to abide.

5. Let the husband and wife infinitely avoid a curious distinction of mine and thine ; for this hath caused all the laws, and all the suits, and all the wars, in the world ; let them who have but one person, have also but one interest. The husband and wife are heirs to each other (as Dionysius Halicarnassense relates from Romulus) if they die without children ; but if there be children, the wife is *τοῖς πατρὶν ἰσόμερος*, "a partner in the inheritance." But during their life, the use and employment is common to both their necessities ; and in this there is no other difference of right, but that the man hath the dispensation of all, and may keep it from his wife, just as the governor of a town may keep it from the right owner ; he hath the power, but no right, to do so. And when either of them begins to impropriate, it is like a tumour in the flesh, it draws more than its share ; but what it feeds on, turns to a bile ; and therefore, the Romans forbade any donations to be made between man and wife, because neither of them could transfer a new right of those things which already they had in common ; but this is to be understood only concerning the uses of necessity and personal conveniences ; for so all may be the woman's, and all may be the man's, in several regards. Corvinus dwells in a farm and receives all its profits, and reaps and sows as he pleases, and eats of the corn and drinks of the wine—it is his own : but all that also is his lord's, and for it Corvinus pays acknowledgment ; and

his patron hath such powers and uses of it as are proper to the lord's; and yet, for all this, it may be the king's too, to all the purposes that he can need, and is all to be accounted in the census and for certain services and times of danger; so are the riches of a family; they are a woman's as well as a man's: they are hers for need, and hers for ornament, and hers for modest delight, and for the uses of religion and prudent charity; but the disposing them into portions of inheritance, the assignation of charges and governments, stipends and rewards, annuities and greater donatives, are the reserves of the superior right, and not to be invaded by the under possessors. But in those things, where they ought to be common, if the spleen or the belly swells and draws into its capacity much of that which should be spent on those parts which have an equal right to be maintained, it is a dropsy or a consumption of the whole, something that is evil because it is unnatural and monstrous. Macarius, in his thirty-second homily, speaks fully in this particular: a woman betrothed to a man bears all her portion, and with a mighty love pours it into the hands of her husband, and says, *ἐμὸν οὐδὲν ἔχω*, "I have nothing of my own;" my goods, my portion, my body, and my mind are yours. "All that a woman hath, is reckoned to the right of her husband; not her wealth and person only, but her reputation and her praise."¹ But as the earth, the mother of all creatures here below, sends up all its vapours and proper emissions at the command of the sun, and

¹ *Νόμῳ γὰρ ἅπαντα γίγνεται τοῦ γεγαμηκότος, τὸν πλουτοῦν, τὴν δόξαν, τοὺς ἐπαίνους.*—Lucian.

yet requires them again to refresh her own needs, and they are deposited between them both in the bosom of a cloud, as a common receptacle, that they may cool his flames, and yet descend to make her fruitful; so are the properties of a wife to be disposed of by her lord; and yet all are for her provisions, it being a part of his need to refresh and supply hers, and it serves the interest of both while it serves the necessities of either.

These are the duties of them both, which have common regards and equal necessities and obligations; and, indeed, there is scarce any matter of duty, but it concerns them both alike, and is only distinguished by names, and hath its variety by circumstances and little accidents: and what in one is called 'love,' in the other is called 'reverence;' and what in the wife is obedience, the same in the man is duty. He provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her. For as the heart is set in the midst of the body, and though it strikes to one side by the prerogative of nature, yet those throbs and constant motions are felt on the other side also, and the influence is equal to both; so it is in conjugal duties: some motions are to the one side more than to the other, but the interest is on both, and the duty is equal in the several instances. If it be otherwise, the man enjoys a wife as Periander did his dead Melissa, by an unnatural union, neither pleasing nor holy, useless to all the purposes of society, and dead to content.

PART II.

THE next inquiry is more particular, and considers the power and duty of the man; 'Let every one of you so love his wife even as himself:' she is as himself; the man hath power over her as over himself, and must love her equally. A husband's power over his wife is paternal and friendly, not magisterial and despotic. The wife is in *perpetua tutela*, under conduct and counsel; for the power a man hath, is founded in the understanding, not in the will or force; it is not a power of coercion, but a power of advice, and that government that wise men have over those who are fit to be conducted by them. "Husbands should rather be fathers than lords,"¹ said Valerius, in Livy. Homer adds more soft appellatives to the character of a husband's duty: "Thou art to be a father and a mother to her, and a brother:"² and great reason, unless the state of marriage should be no better than the condition of an orphan. For she that is bound to leave father, and mother, and brother for thee, either is miserable, like a poor fatherless child, or else ought to find all these, and more, in thee. Medea in Euripides had cause to complain when she found it otherwise.

Πάντων δ', ὅσ' ἔστ' ἐμψυχα, καὶ γνώμην ἔχει,
 Γυναῖκίς ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν.
 "Ἄς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
 Πόσιν πριάσθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος
 Δαβεῖν."³

¹ Et vos in manu et in tutela, non in servitio debetis habere eas; et malle patres vos, et viros, quam dominos dici.

² Πατήρ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν αὐτῇ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ, ἡδὲ κασίγνητος.

³ Med. 232. Porson.

Which St. Ambrose¹ well translates : "It is sad, when virgins are with their own money sold to slavery ; and that services are in better state than marriages ; for they receive wages, but these buy their fetters, and pay dear for their loss of liberty ;" and therefore, the Romans expressed the man's power over his wife but by a gentle word : "Let there be no governor of the woman appointed, but a censor of manners, one to teach the men to moderate their wives,"² said Cicero ; that is, fairly to induce them to the measures of their own proportions. It was rarely observed of Philo,³ "When Adam made that fond excuse for his folly in eating the forbidden fruit, he said, 'The woman thou gavest to be *with* me, she gave me.' He says not 'The woman which thou gavest *to* me,' no such thing ; she is none of his goods, none of his possessions, not to be reckoned amongst his servants ; God did not give her to him so ; but 'The woman thou gavest to be *with* me ;' that is, to be my partner the companion of my joys and sorrows, thou gavest her for use, not for dominion." The dominion of a man over his wife is no other than as the soul rules the body ; for which it takes a mighty care, and uses it with a delicate tenderness, and cares for it in all contingencies, and watches to keep it from all evils, and studies to make for it fair provisions, and very often is led by its inclinations and desires, and does never contradict its appetites but when they are evil, and then also not without some

¹ Exhort. ad Virg.

² Nec vero mulieribus præfectus reponatur, qui apud Græcos creari solet, sed sit censor qui viros doceat moderari uxoribus.

³ Εὖ τὸ μὴ φάναι, ἡ γυνὴ ἣν ἔδωκας ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ, μετ' ἐμοῦ· οὐ γάρ ἐμοί ὡς κτῆμα τὴν αἰσθησιν ἔδωκας, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴν ἀφῆκας ἀνετον καὶ ἐλεύθερον.

trouble and sorrows; and its government comes only to this, it furnishes the body with light and understanding, and the body furnishes the soul with hands and feet; the soul governs, because the body cannot else be happy, but the government is no other than provision; as a nurse governs a child, when she causes him to eat, and to be warm, and dry, and quiet. And yet even the very government itself is divided; for man and wife in the family are as the sun and moon in the firmament of heaven; he rules by day, and she by night, that is, in the lesser and more proper circles of her affairs, in the conduct of domestic provisions and necessary offices, and shines only by his light, and rules by his authority; and as the moon in opposition to the sun shines brightest; that is, then, when she is in her own circles and separate regions; so is the authority of the wife then most conspicuous, when she is separate and in her proper sphere,—*in gynæceo*, in the nursery and offices of domestic employment: but when she is in conjunction with the sun her brother, that is, in that place and employment in which his care and proper offices are employed, her light is not seen, her authority hath no proper business; but else there is no difference. For they were barbarous people, among whom wives were instead of servants, said Spartianus in Caracalla; and it is a sign of impotency and weakness, to force the camels to kneel for their load, because thou hast not spirit and strength enough to climb; to make the affections and evenness of a wife bend by the flexures of a servant, is a sign the man is not wise enough to govern, when another stands by. So many differences as can be in the appellatives of governor and governess, lord and

lady, master and mistress, the same difference there is in the authority of man and woman, and no more; *Si tu Caius, ego Caia*, was publicly proclaimed on the threshold of the young man's house, when the bride entered into his hands and power; and the title of *domina* in the sense of the civil law, was among the Romans given to wives.

And, therefore, although there is just measure of subjection and obedience due from the wife to the husband, (as I shall after explain,) yet nothing of this is expressed in the man's character, or in his duty; he is not commanded to rule, nor instructed how, nor bidden to exact obedience, or to defend his privilege; all his duty is signified by love, 'by nourishing and cherishing,'¹ by being joined with her in all the unions of charity, by 'not being bitter to her,'² by 'dwelling with her according to knowledge, giving honour to her:'³ so that it seems to be with husbands as it is with bishops and priests, to whom much honour is due; but yet so that if they stand on it, and challenge it, they become less honourable: and as amongst men and women humility is the way to be preferred, so it is in husbands, they shall prevail by cession, by sweetness and counsel, and charity and compliance. So that we cannot discourse of the man's right, without describing the measures of his duty; that therefore follows next.

2. 'Let him love his wife even as himself:'—that is his duty, and the measure of it too; which is so plain, that if he understands how he treats himself, there needs nothing be added concerning

¹ Ephes. v. 25.

² Col. iii. 19.

³ 1 Pet. iii. 7.

his demeanour towards her, save only that we add the particulars, in which Holy Scripture instances this general commandment.

‘Be not bitter against her;’ that is the first; and this is the least index and signification of love: a civil man is never bitter against a friend or a stranger, much less to him that enters under his roof, and is secured by the laws of hospitality. But a wife does all that and more; she quits all her interest for his love, she gives him all that she can give, she is as much the same person as another can be the same, who is conjoined by love, and mystery, and religion, and all that is sacred and profane.

They have the same fortune, the same family, the same children, the same religion, the same interest, ‘the same flesh;’ and therefore this the apostle urges for his *μὴ πικραίνετε*, ‘be not bitter,’ ‘no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it;’ and he certainly is strangely sacrilegious and a violater of the rights of hospitality and sanctuary, who uses her rudely, who is fled for protection, not only to his house, but also to his heart and bosom. A wise man will not wrangle with any one, much less with his dearest relative; and if it is accounted indecent to embrace in public, it is extremely shameful to brawl in public: for the other is in itself lawful; but this never, though it were assisted with the best circumstances of which it is capable. Marcus Aurelius said, that “a wise man ought often to admonish his wife, to reprove her seldom, but never to lay his hands on her.”

St. Chrysostom preaching earnestly against this

barbarous inhumanity of striking the wife, or reviling her with evil language, says, it is as if a king should beat his viceroy and use him like a dog; from whom most of that reverence and majesty must needs depart, which he first put on him, and the subjects shall pay him less duty, how much his prince hath treated him with less civility; but the loss redounds to himself; and the government of the whole family shall be disordered, if blows be laid on that shoulder which together with the other ought to bear nothing but the cares and the issues of a prudent government. And it is observable, that no man ever did this rudeness for a virtuous end; it is an incompetent instrument, and may proceed from wrath and folly, but can never end in virtue and the unions of a prudent and fair society. "If you strike, you exasperate the wound, (saith St. Chrysostom,) and (like Cato at Utica in his despair) tear the wounds in pieces;"¹ and yet he that did so ill to himself whom he loved well, he loved not women tenderly, and yet would never strike; and if the man cannot endure her talking, how can she endure his striking? But this caution contains a duty in it which none prevaricates, but the meanest of the people, fools, and bedlams, whose kindness is a curse, whose government is by chance and violence, and their families are herds of talking cattle.

The martial love is infinitely removed from all possibility of such rudeness: it is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world. *Amicitia, quæ desinere potuit, nunquam vera fuit*, said one;

¹ Quod si verberaveris, exasperabis morbum: asperitas enim mansuetudine, non alia asperitate, dissolvitur.

"That love, that can cease, was never true;" it is *ὁμιλία*, so Moses called it; it is *εὐνοια*, so St. Paul; it is *φιλότης*, so Homer; it is *φιλοφροσύνη*, so Plutarch: that is, it contains in it all sweetness and all society, and felicity, and all prudence, and all wisdom. For there is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocency of an even and a private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; "for nothing can sweeten felicity itself but love:"¹ but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings on the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrow down on her lap, and can retire home to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society: but he that loves not his wife and children, feeds a lioness at home, and broods a nest of sorrows: and blessing itself cannot make him happy. So that all the commandments of God en-

"*Felices ter et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis,
Suprema citius solvet amor die.*"

Horat. Od. i. 13. 17.

joining a man 'to love his wife,' are nothing but so many necessities and capacities of joy. 'She that is loved, is safe; and he that loves is joyful.' Love is a union of all things excellent; it contains in it proportion and satisfaction, and rest and confidence; and I wish that this were so much proceeded in, that the heathens themselves could not go beyond us in this virtue, and its proper and its appendant happiness. Tiberius Gracchus chose to die for the safety of his wife; and yet methinks for a Christian to do so, should be no hard thing; for many servants will die for their masters, and many gentlemen will die for their friend; but the examples are not so many of those that are ready to do it for their dearest relatives, and yet some there have been. Baptista Fregosa tells of a Neapolitan, that gave himself a slave to the Moors, that he might follow his wife; and Dominicus Catalusius, the prince of Lesbos, kept company with his lady when she was a leper: and these are greater things than to die.

But the cases in which this can be required, are so rare and contingent, that Holy Scripture instances not the duty in this particular; but it contains in it, that the husband should nourish and cherish her, that he should refresh her sorrows and entice her fears into confidence and pretty arts of rest; for even the fig-trees that grew in paradise had sharp-pointed leaves, and harshnesses fit to mortify the too-forward lusting after the sweetness of the fruit. But it will concern the prudence of the husband's love to make the cares and evils as simple and easy as he can, by doubling the joys and acts of a careful friendship, by tolerating her infirmities, (because, by so doing, he either cures her or makes

himself better,) by fairly expounding all the little traverses of society and communication, "by taking every thing by the right handle," as Plutarch's expression is; for there is nothing but may be misinterpreted, and yet if it be capable of a fair construction, it is the office of love to make it. Love will account that to be well said, which, it may be, was not so intended; and then it may cause it to be so another time.¹

3. Hither also is to be referred that he secure the interest of her virtue and felicity by a fair example; for a wife to a husband is a line of superficies; it hath dimensions of its own, but no motion or proper affections, but commonly puts on such images of virtues or vices as are presented to her by her husband's idea: and if thou beest vicious, complain not that she is infected that lies in thy bosom; the interest of whose love ties her to transcribe thy copy, and write after the characters of thy manners. Paris was a man of pleasure, and Helena was an adulteress, and she added covetousness on her own account. But Ulysses was a prudent man, and a wary counsellor, sober and severe; and he efformed his wife into such imagery as he desired; and she was chaste as the snows on the mountains, diligent as the fatal sisters, always busy, and always faithful; "she had a lazy tongue, and a busy hand."²

4. Above all the instances of love let him preserve towards her an inviolable faith, and an unspotted chastity; for this is THE MARRIAGE RING; it ties two hearts by an eternal band; it is like the

¹ Εὖ λέγειν δ', ὅτ' ἂν τι λέξῃ, χρηὴ δοκεῖν, καὶ μὴ λέγῃ.
Κάκῃ ποιεῖν, ἃ 'ν τῷ ξυνόντι πρὸς χάριν μέλλῃ λέγειν.

Eurip.

² Γλῶσσαν μὲν ἀργήν, χεῖρα δ' εἶχεν ἐργάτην.

cherubim's flaming sword, set for the guard of paradise; he that passes into that garden, now that it is immured by Christ and the church, enters into the shades of death. No man must touch the forbidden tree, that in the midst of the garden, which is the tree of knowledge and life. Chastity is the security of love, and preserves all the mysteriousness like the secrets of a temple. Under this lock is deposited security of families, the union of affections, the repairer of accidental breaches. This is a grace that is shut up and secured by all arts of heaven, and the defence of laws, the locks and bars of modesty, by honour and reputation, by fear and shame, by interest and high regards; and that contract that is intended to be for ever, is yet dissolved and broken by the violation of this; nothing but death can do so much evil to the holy rites of marriage, as unchastity and breach of faith can. By the laws of the Romans, a man might kill his daughter or his wife, if he surprised her in the breach of her holy vows, which are as sacred as the threads of life, secret as the privacies of the sanctuary, and holy as the society of angels; and God that commanded us to forgive our enemies, left it in our choice, and hath not commanded us to forgive an adulterous husband or a wife; but the offended party's displeasure may pass into an eternal separation of society and friendship. Now in this grace it is fit that the wisdom and severity of the man should hold forth a pure taper, that his wife may, by seeing the beauties and transparencies of that crystal, dress her mind and her body by the light of so pure reflexions; it is certain he will expect it from the modesty and retirement, from the passive nature and colder temper, from the humility and fear,

from the honour and love, of his wife, that she be pure as the eye of heaven : and therefore it is but reason that the wisdom and nobleness, the love and confidence, the strength and severity, of the man, should be as holy and certain in this grace, as he is a severe exactor of it at her hands, who can more easily be tempted by another, and less by herself.

These are the little lines of a man's duty, which, like threads of light from the body of the sun, do clearly describe all the regions of his proper obligations. Now concerning the woman's duty, although it consists in doing whatsoever her husband commands, and so receives measures from the rules of his government, yet there are also some lines of life depicted on her hands, by which she may read and know how to proportion out her duty to her husband.

1. The first is obedience ; which because it is nowhere enjoined that the man should exact of her, but often commanded to her to pay, gives demonstration that it is a voluntary cession that is required ; such a cession as must be without coercion and violence on his part, but on fair inducements, and reasonableness in the thing, and out of love and honour on her part. When God commands us to love him, he means we should obey him : ' This is love, that ye keep my commandments ; ' and ' if ye love me ' said our Lord, ' keep my commandments. ' Now as Christ is to the church, so is man to the wife ; and therefore obedience is the best instance of her love ; for it proclaims her submission, her humility, her opinion of his wisdom, his pre-eminence in the family, the right of his privilege, and the injunction imposed by God on her sex, that although in sorrow she bring forth chil-

dren, yet with love and choice she should obey. The man's authority is love, and the woman's love is obedience; and it was not rightly observed of him that said, when the woman fell, "God made her timorous, that she might be ruled, apt and easy to obey;" for this obedience is no way founded in fear, but in love and reverence; unless also that we will add, that it is an effect of that modesty, which like rubies, adorns the necks and cheeks of women. *Pudicitia est, pater, Eos magnificare, qui nos socias sumpserunt sibi,*¹ said the maiden in the comedy: "it is modesty to advance and highly to honour them, who have honoured us by making us to be the companions of their dearest excellencies;" for the women that went before the man in the way of death, is commanded to follow him in the way of love; and that makes the society to be perfect, and the union profitable, and the harmony complete. For then the soul and body make a perfect man, when the soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly, and cares profitably, and provides plentifully, and conducts charitably that body which is its partner, and yet the inferior. But if the body shall give laws, and, by the violence of the appetite, first abuse the understanding, and then possess the superior portion of the will and choice, the body and the soul are not apt company, and the man is a fool and miserable. If the soul rules not, it cannot be a companion; either it must govern, or be a slave: never was king deposed and suffered to live in the state of peerage and equal honour, but made a prisoner, or put to death; and those women, that had rather lead the blind than follow prudent

¹ Plautus in Stichos, i. 2, 43.

guides, rule fools and easy men than obey the powerful and wise, never made a good society in a house: a wife never can become equal but by obeying; but so her power, while it is in minority, makes up the authority of the man integral, and becomes one government, as themselves are one man. 'Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam,' saith the Holy Scripture;¹ they are but one; and therefore, the several parts of this one man must stand in the place where God appointed, that the lower parts may do their offices in their own station, and promote the common interest of the whole. A ruling woman is intolerable.² But that is not all; for she is miserable too.³ It is a sad calamity for a woman to be joined to a fool or a weak person; it is like a guard of geese to keep the capitol; or as if a flock of sheep should read grave lectures to their shepherd, and give him orders where he shall conduct them to pasture. "To have a fool to one's master,"⁴ is the fate of miserable and unblessed people; and the wife can be no ways happy, unless she be governed by a prudent lord, whose commands are sober counsels, whose authority is paternal, whose orders are provisions, and whose sentences are charity.

But now concerning the measures and limits of this obedience, we can best take accounts from Scripture: *ἐν παντί*, saith the Apostle, 'in all

¹ Gen. v. 2.

² " ———— *Faciunt graviora coactæ*
Imperio sexus." Juvenal, vi. 109.

³ *Τὰ δευτερέια τὴν γυναῖκα δεῖ λέγειν,*
τὴν δ' ἡγεμονίαν τῶν ὅλων τον ἄνδρ' ἔχειν.

⁴ *Δοῦλον γενέσθαι παραφρονοῦντος δεσπότου.* — Arist. Plut. 2.

things,'¹ 'as to the Lord;' and that is large enough; 'as unto a lord,' *ut ancilla domino*; so St. Jerome understands it, who neither was a friend to the sex, nor to marriage; but his mistake is soon confuted by the text; it is not *ut dominis*, be subject to your husbands 'as unto lords,' but *ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ*, that is, 'in all religion,' in reverence and in love, in duty and zeal, in faith and knowledge; or else *ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ*, may signify, 'wives be subject to your husbands; but yet so, that at the same time ye be subject to the Lord.' For that is the measure of *ἐν παντί*, 'in all things;' and it is more plain in the parallel place, *ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν Κυρίῳ*, 'as it is fit in the Lord:'² religion must be the measure of your obedience and subjection: *intra limites disciplinæ*; so Tertullian expresses it. So Clemens Alex. "In all things let the wife be subject to the husband, so as to do nothing against his will; those only things excepted, in which he is impious or refractory in things pertaining to wisdom and piety."³

But in this also there is some peculiar caution. For although in those things which are of the necessary parts of faith and holy life, the woman is only subject to Christ, who only is and can be Lord of consciences, and commands alone where the conscience is instructed and convinced; yet as it is part of the man's office to be a teacher, and a prophet, and a guide, and a master, so also it will relate very much to the demonstration of their affections to obey his counsels, to imitate his virtues, to be directed by his wisdom, to have her persuasion

¹ Ephes. v. 24.

² Col. iii. 18.

³ Πάντα μὲν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πειθομένη, ὡς μηδὲν, ἄκοντος ἐκείνου, πράξαι ποτέ, πλὴν ὅσα εἰς ἀρετὴν καὶ σοφίαν διαφέρειν νομίζεται.—Stromat. 7.

measured by the lines of his excellent religion: "It were hugely decent," saith Plutarch, "that the wife should acknowledge her husband for her teacher and her guide;"¹ for then when she is what he please to efform her, he hath no cause to complain if she be no better: "his precepts and wise counsels can draw her off from vanities;"² and what he said of geometry, that, if she be skilled in that, she will not easily be a gamester or a dancer, may perfectly be said of religion. If she suffers herself to be guided by his counsel, and efformed by his religion, either he is an ill master in his religion, or he may secure in her and for his advantage an excellent virtue. And although in matters of religion the husband hath no empire and command, yet if there be a place left to persuade, and entreat, and induce by arguments, there is not in a family a greater endearment of affections than the unity of religion: and anciently it was not permitted to a woman to have a religion by herself;³ and the rites which a woman performs severally from her husband, are not pleasing to God; and therefore Pomponia Græcina, because she entertained a stranger religion, was permitted to the judgment of her husband Plantius: and this whole affair is no stranger to Christianity, for the Christian woman was not suffered to marry an unbelieving man; and although this is not to be extended to different opinions within the limits of the common faith, yet

¹ Οὐχ ἦττον δὲ σεμνὸν ἀκούσαι γαμετῆς λεγούσης, ἀνὴρ σὺ μοι ἐσσι κατηγηγῆς καὶ φιλόσοφος καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν καλλίστων καὶ θειοτάτων

² Τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα πρῶτον ἀφίστησι τῶν ἀτόπων τὰς γυναῖκας.

³ "Eosdem quos maritus nosse Deos et colere solos uxor debet."—Plutarch.

thus much advantage is won or lost by it, that the compliance of the wife, and submission of her understanding to the better rule of her husband in matters of religion, will help very much to warrant her, though she should be mispersuaded in a matter less necessary; yet nothing can warrant her in her separate rites and manners of worshippings, but an invincible necessity of conscience, and a curious infallible truth; and if she be deceived alone, she hath no excuse; if with him, she hath much pity, and some degrees of warranty under the protection of humility, and duty, and dear affections; and she will find that it is part of her privilege and right to partake of the mysteries and blessings of her husband's religion. Where there is a schism in one bed, there is a nursery of temptations, and love is persecuted and in perpetual danger to be destroyed; there dwell jealousies, and divided interests, and differing opinions, and continual disputes, and we cannot love them so well, whom we believe to be less beloved of God; and it is ill uniting with a person, concerning whom my persuasion tells me, that he is like to live in hell to eternal ages.

2. The next line of the woman's duty is compliance, which St. Peter calls 'the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit,'¹ and to it he opposes 'the outward and pompous ornament of the body;' concerning which, as there can be no particular measure set down to all persons, but the proportions were to be measured by the customs of wise people, the quality of the woman, and the desires of the man; yet it is to be

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 4.

limited by Christian modesty, and the usages of the more excellent and severe matrons. Menander in the comedy brings in a man turning his wife from his house, because she stained her hair yellow, which was then the beauty.¹ A wise woman should not paint. A studious gallantry in clothes cannot make a wise man love his wife the better.² *Decor occultus, et tecta venustas*; that is the Christian woman's fineness; 'the hidden man of the heart,' sweetness of manners, humble comportment, fair interpretation of all addresses, ready compliance, high opinion of him and mean of herself.³

Ἐν κοινῷ λύπης ἡδονῆς τ' ἔχειν μέρος, "To partake secretly, and in her heart, of all his joys and sorrows," to believe him comely and fair, though the sun hath drawn a cyprus over him; for as marriages are not to be contracted by the hands and eye, but with reason and the hearts; so are these judgments to be made by the mind, not by the sight;⁴ and diamonds cannot make the woman virtuous, nor him to value her who sees her put them off then, when charity and modesty are her brightest ornaments. And, indeed, those husbands that are

¹ Νῦν δ' ἔρπ' ἀπ' οἴκων τῶνδε τὴν γυναικα γάρ
τὴν σώφρον' οὐ δεῖ τὰς τρίχας ξανθὰς ποιεῖν.

Cleric. p. 258.

² " Quid juvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo,
Teque peregrinis vendere muneribus,
Naturæque decus mercato perdere cultu,
Nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis ?"

Propert. i. el. 1.

³ Malo Venusinam, quam te, Cornelia, mater
Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus affers
Grande supercilium, et numeras in dote triumphos.

Juven. Sat. vi. 142.

⁴ Πρῶτα μὲν γε τοῦθ' ὑπάρχειν' κἂν ἀμορφος ᾗ πόσις, χρὴ
δοκεῖν εὐμορφον εἶναι τῇ γε νοῦν κεκτημένῃ· οὐ γὰρ ὀφθαλμὸς
τὸ κρίνον ἐστὶν ἀλλὰ νοῦς.

pleased with indecent gaities of their wives, are like fishes taken with ointments and intoxicating baits, apt and easy for sport and mockery, but useless for food; and when Circe had turned Ulysses's companions into hogs and monkeys, by pleasures and the enchantments of her bravery and luxury, they were no longer useful to her, she knew not what to do with them; but on wise Ulysses she was continually enamoured. Indeed, the outward ornament is fit to take fools, but they are not worth the taking; but she that hath a wise husband, must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness, and the jewels of faith and charity; she must have no fucus but blushings, her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetnesses and friendship, and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies. If not, her grave shall be full of rottenness and dishonour, and her memory shall be worse after she is dead:¹ "after she is dead;" for that will be the end of all merry meetings; and I choose this to be the last advice to both.

3. "Remember the days of darkness, for they are many;" the joys of the bridal chamber are quickly past, and the remaining portion of the state is a dull progress, without variety of joys, but not without the change of sorrows; but that portion that shall enter into the grave must be eternal. It is fit that I should infuse a bunch of myrrh into the festal goblet, and, after the Egyptian manner, serve up a dead man's bones at a feast: I will only show it, and take it away again; it will make the wine

¹ See Mitscherl. Horat. i. 4.

bitter, but wholesome. But those married pairs that live as remembering they must part again, and give an account how they treat themselves and each other, shall, at that day of their death, be admitted to glorious espousals; and when they shall live again, be married to their Lord, and partake of his glories, with Abraham and Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the married saints. "All those things that now please us shall pass from us, or we from them;"¹ but those things that concern the other life, are permanent as the numbers of eternity: and although at the resurrection there shall be no relation of husband and wife, and no marriage shall be celebrated but the marriage of the Lamb; yet then shall be remembered how men and women passed through this state which is a type of that, and from this sacramental union all holy pairs shall pass to the spiritual and eternal, where love shall be their portion, and joys shall crown their heads, and they shall lie in the bosom of Jesus, and in the heart of God to eternal ages. Amen.

¹ Θνητὰ τὰ τῶν θνητῶν, καὶ πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς·
Εἰ εἰ μὴ, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ παρερχόμεθα.

SERMON V.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS EVANGELICAL
DESCRIBED.

 MATTHEW, v. 20.

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

REWARDS and punishments are the best sanction of laws; and although the guardians of laws strike sometimes with the softest part of the hand, in their executions of sad sentences, yet in the sanction they make no abatements, but so proportion the duty to the reward, and the punishment to the crime, that by these we can best tell what value the lawgiver puts on the obedience. Joshua put a great rate on the taking of Kiriath-Sepher, when the reward of the service was his daughter and a dower; but when the young men ventured to fetch David the waters of Bethlehem, they had nothing but the praise of their boldness, because their service was no more than the satisfaction of a curiosity. But as lawgivers, by their rewards, declare the value of the obedience, so do subjects also, by the grandeur

of what they expect, set a value on the law and the lawgiver, and do their services accordingly.

And, therefore, the law of Moses, whose endearment was nothing but temporal goods and transient evils, 'could never make the comers thereunto perfect;' but the *ἐπεισαγωγή κρείττονος ἐλπίδος*, 'the superinduction of a better hope,'¹ hath endeared a more perfect obedience. When Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and hath promised to us things greater than all our explicit desires, bigger than the thoughts of our heart, then, saith the apostle, 'we draw near to God;' and by these we are enabled to do all that God requires, and then he requires all that we can do; more love and more obedience than he did of those, who, for want of these helps, and these revelations, and these promises, which we have, but they had not, were but imperfect persons, and could do but little more than human services. Christ hath taught us more, and given us more, and promised to us more, than ever was in the world known or believed before him; and by the strengths and confidence of these, thrusts us forward in a holy and wise economy; and plainly declares, that we must serve him by the measures of a new love, do him honour by wise and material glorifications, be united to God by a new nature, and made alive by a new birth, and fulfil all righteousness; to be humble and meek as Christ, to be merciful as our heavenly Father is, to be pure as God is pure, to be partakers of the Divine nature, to be wholly renewed in the frame and temper of our mind, to become people of a new heart, a direct new crea-

¹ Heb. vii. 19.

tion, new principles, and a new being, to do better than all the world before us ever did, to love God more perfectly, to despise the world more generously, to contend for the faith more earnestly: for all this is but a proper and a just consequent of the great promises, which our blessed Lawgiver came to publish and effect for all the world of believers and disciples.

The matter which is here required, is certainly very great; for it is to be more righteous than the Scribes and Pharisees; more holy than the doctors of the law, than the leaders of the synagogue, than the wise princes of the sanhedrim; more righteous than some that were prophets and high-priests, than some that kept the ordinances of the law without blame; men that lay in sackcloth, and fasted much, and prayed more, and made religion and the study of the law the work of their lives: this was very much; but Christians must do more.

They did well, and we must do better; their houses were marble, but our roofs must be gilded and fuller of glory.¹ But as the matter is very great, so the necessity of it is the greatest in the world. It must be so, or it will be much worse: unless it be thus, we shall never see the glorious face of God. Here it concerns us to be wise and fearful; for the matter is not a question of an oaken garland, or a circle of bays, and a yellow riband: it is not a question of money or land, nor of the vainer rewards of popular noises, and the undiscerning suffrages of the people, who are contingent judges of good and evil; but it is the great stake of life eternal. We cannot be Christians, unless

¹ Nunc te marmoreum pro tempore fecimus; at tu,
Si fœtura gregem suppleverit, aureus esto.

we be righteous by the new measures: the righteousness of the kingdom is now the only way to enter into it; for the sentence is fixed, and the judgment is decretory, and the Judge infallible, and the decree irreversible: 'For I say unto you,' said Christ, 'unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

Here, then, we have two things to consider. 1. What was the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. 2. How far that is to be exceeded by the righteousness of Christians.

1. Concerning the first. I will not be so nice in the observation of these words, as to take notice that Christ does not name the Sadducees, but the Scribes and Pharisees, though there may be something in it: the Saducees were called "*Caraim*," from *cara*, "to read;" for they thought it religion to spend one-third part of their day in reading their Scriptures, whose fulness they so admired, they would admit of no suppletory traditions; but the Pharisees were called "*Thanaim*," that is, *δευτερώται*; ¹ they added to the word of God words of their own, as the church of Rome does at this day; they and these fell into an equal fate; while they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, they prevaricated the righteousness of God: what the church of Rome, to evil purposes, hath done in this particular, may be demonstrated in due time and place; but what false and corrupt glosses, under the specious title of the tradition of their fathers, the Pharisees had introduced, our blessed Saviour reproveth, and are now to be represented as the *ἀντιπαράδειγμα*, that you may see

¹ Teachers of secondary or traditional laws.—ED.

that righteousness, beyond which all they must go, that intend that heaven should be their journey's end.

The Pharisees obeyed the commandments in the letter, not in the spirit : they minded what God spake, but not what he intended : they were busy in the outward work of the hand, but incurious of the affections and choice of the heart. *Ὑμεῖς πάντα σαρκικῶς νενοήκατε*, said Justin Martyr to Tryphon the Jew, "Ye understand all things carnally;" that is, they rested *ἐν πλάσματι εὐσεβείας*, as Nazianzen calls it, "in the outward work of piety," which not only Justin Martyr, but St. Paul calls 'carnality,' not meaning a carnal appetite, but a carnal service.¹ Their error was plainly this : they never distinguished duties natural from duties relative ; that is, whether it were commanded for itself, or in order to something that was better ; whether it were a principal grace, or an instrumental action : so God was served in the letter, they did not much inquire into his purpose : and, therefore, they were curious to wash their hands, but cared not to purify their hearts ; they would give alms, but hate him that received it ; they would go to the temple, but did not revere the glory of God that dwelt there between the cherubim ; they would fast, but not mortify their lusts ; they would say good prayers, but not labour for the grace they prayed for. This was just as if a man should run on his master's errand, and do no business when he came there. They might easily have thought, that by the soul only a man approaches to God, and draws the body after it ; but that no washing or corporal

¹ Gal. iii. 3. and vi. 12, 13. Phil. iii. 34.

services could unite them and the shechinah together, no such thing could make them like to God, who is the Prince of Spirits. They did as the dunces in Pythagoras's school, who, when their master had said, *Fabæ abstineto*, by which he intended, "they should not ambitiously seek for magistracy," they thought themselves good Pythagoreans if they "did not eat beans;" and they would be sure to put their right foot first into the shoe, and their left foot into the water, and supposed they had done enough; though if they had not been fools, they would have understood their master's meaning to have been, that they should put more affections to labour and travel, and less to their pleasure and recreation. And so it was with the Pharisee: for as the Chaldees taught their morality by mystic words, and the Egyptians by hieroglyphics, and the Greeks by fables, so did God by rites and ceremonies external, leading them by the hand to the purities of the heart, and by the services of the body to the obedience of the spirit; which because they would not understand, they thought they had done enough in the observation of the letter.

2. In moral duties, where God expressed himself more plainly, they made no commentary of kindness, but regarded the prohibition so nakedly, and divested of all antecedents, consequents, similitudes, and proportions, that if they stood clear of that hated name which was set down in Moses's tables, they gave themselves liberty in many instances of the same kindred alliance. If they abstained from murder, they thought it very well, though they made no scruple of murdering their brother's fame: they would not cut his throat, but

they would call him fool, or invent lies in secret, and publish his disgrace openly; they would not dash out his brains, but they would be extremely and unreasonably angry with him; they would not steal their brother's money, but they would oppress him in crafty and cruel bargains. The commandment forbade them to commit adultery; but because fornication was not named, they made no scruple of that; and being commanded to honour their father and their mother, they would give them good words and fair observances; but because it was not named that they should maintain them in their need, they thought they did well enough to pretend *corban*, and let their father starve.

3. The Scribes and Pharisees placed their righteousness in negatives: they would not commit what was forbidden, but they cared but little for the included positive, and the omissions of good actions did not much trouble them; they would not hurt their brother in a forbidden instance, but neither would they do him good according to the intention of the commandment. It was a great innocence if they did not rob the poor,—then they were righteous men; but they thought themselves not much concerned to acquire that godlike excellency, a philanthropy and love to all mankind. Whosoever blasphemed God was to be put to death; but he that did not glorify God as he ought, they were unconcerned for him, and let him alone. He that spake against Moses, was to die without mercy; but against the ambitious and the covetous, against the proud man and the unmerciful, they made no provisions. They accounted themselves good, not for doing good, but for doing no evil; that was the sum of their theology.

4. They had one thing more as bad as all this: they broke Moses's tables into pieces, and, gathering up the fragments, took to themselves what part of duty they pleased, and let the rest alone; for it was a proverb amongst the Jews, *Qui operam dat præcepto, liber est a præcepto*; that is, "if he chooses one positive commandment for his business, he may be less careful in any of the rest." Indeed, they said also, "He that multiplies the law, increases life:"¹ that is, if he did attend to more good things, it was so much the better, but the other was well enough: but as for universal obedience, that was not the measure of their righteousness; for they taught that God would put our good works and bad into the balance, and according to the heavier scale, give a portion in the world to come; so that some evil they would allow to themselves and their disciples, always provided it was less than the good they did. They would devour widows' houses, and make it up by long prayers; they would love their nation, and hate their prince; offer sacrifice, and curse Cæsar in their heart; advance Judaism, and destroy humanity.

Lastly: St. Austin summed up the difference between the pharisaical and evangelical righteousness in two words—*timor et amor*, 'fear and love.' They served the God of their fathers in the spirit of fear; and we worship the Father of our Lord Jesus in the spirit of love, and by the spirit of adoption. And as this slavish principle of theirs was the cause of all their former imperfections, so it finally and chiefly expressed itself in these two particu-

¹ *Qui multiplicat legem, multiplicat vitam.*

lars:—1. they would do all that they thought they lawfully could do: 2. they would do nothing but what was expressly commanded.

This was the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and their disciples, the Jews; which, because our blessed Saviour reproves, not only as imperfect then, but as criminal now, calling us on to a new righteousness, the righteousness of God, to the law of the Spirit of life, to the kingdom of God, and the proper righteousness thereof; it concerns us, in the next place, to look after the measures of this; ever remembering that it is infinitely necessary that we should do so; and men do not generally know, or not consider, what it is to be a Christian; they understand not what the Christian law forbiddeth or commandeth. But as for this in my text, it is, indeed, our great measure; but it is not a question of good and better, but of good and evil, life and death, salvation and damnation; for unless our righteousness be weighed by new weights, we shall be found too light, when God comes to weigh the actions of all the world; and unless we be more righteous than they, we ‘shall in nowise,’ that is, on no other terms in the world, ‘enter into the kingdom of heaven.’

Now concerning this, we shall do very much amiss, if we take our measures by the manners and practices of the many who call themselves Christians; for there are, as Nazianzen expresses it, the *οἱ τότε καὶ νῦν Φαρισαῖοι*, “the old and the new Pharisees.” I wish it were no worse amongst us; and that all Christians were indeed righteous as they were; *est aliquid prodire tenus*; it would not be just nothing. But I am sure that to bid defiance to the laws of Christ, to laugh at religion, to make

a merriment at the debauchery and damnation of our brother, is a state of evil worse than that of the Scribes and Pharisees; and yet, even among such men, how impatient would they be, and how unreasonable would they think you to be, if you should tell them, that there are no present hopes or possibility, that, in this state they are in, they can be saved!

But the world is too full of Christians, whose righteousness is very little, and their iniquities very great; and now-a-days, a Christian is a man that comes to church on Sundays, and on the week following will do shameful things; being, according to the Jewish proverbial reproof, as so many Mephibosheths: "their master teaches them to go uprightly, but they still show their lame leg, and shame their master;"¹ as if a man might be a Christian, and yet be the vilest person in the world, doing such things for which the laws of men have provided smart and shame, and the laws of God have threatened the intolerable pains of an insufferable and never-ending damnation. Example here cannot be our rule, unless men were much better; and, as long as men live at the rate they do, it will be to little purpose to talk of exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees; but because it must be much better with us all, or it will be very much worse with us at the latter end, I shall leave complaining, and go to the rule, and describe the necessary and unavoidable measures of the righteousness evangelical, without which we can never be saved.

¹ Discipuli sapientum, qui incessu pudefaciunt præceptorem suum.

1. Therefore, when it is said, our 'righteousness must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees,' let us first take notice, by the way of precognition, that it must at least be so much; we must keep the letter of the whole moral law; we must do all that lies before us, all that is in our hand; and therefore *ὀργιάζεσθαι*, which signifies "to be religious," the grammarians derive ἀπὸ τοῦ χειρὸς ὀρέγεσθαι, "from reaching forth the hand:" the outward work must be done; and it is not enough to say, "My heart is right, but my hand went aside." Prudentius saith, that St. Peter wept so bitterly, because he did not confess Christ openly, whom he loved secretly.¹

A right heart alone will not do it; or rather, the heart is not right, when the hand is wrong. 'If a man strikes his neighbour, and says, Am not I in jest? it is folly and shame to him,' said Solomon. For, once for all, let us remember this, that Christianity is the most profitable, the most useful, and the most bountiful institution in the whole world; and the best definition I can give of it is this:—it is the wisdom of God brought down among us, to do good to men; and therefore we must not do less than the Pharisees, who did the outward work; at least, let us be sure to do all the work that is laid before us in the commandments. And it is strange that this should be needful to be pressed amongst Christians, whose religion requires so very much more. But so it is, on a pretence that we must serve God with the mind, some are such fools as to think that it is enough to have a good meaning.

¹ Flevit negator denique
Ex ore prolapsum nefas,
Cum mens maneret innocens,
Animusque servavit fidem.

And because we must serve God in the spirit, therefore they will not serve God with their bodies; and because they are called on to have the power and the life of godliness, they abominate all external works as mere forms; and because the true fast is to abstain from sin, therefore they will not abstain from meat and drink, even when they are commanded; which is just as if a Pharisee, being taught the circumcision of the heart, should refuse to circumcise his flesh; and as if a Christian, being instructed in the excellencies of spiritual communion, should wholly neglect the sacramental; that is, because the soul is the life of man, therefore it is fitting to die in a humour, and lay aside the body. This is a taking away the subject of the question; for our inquiry is,—how we should keep the commandments; how we are to do the work that lies before us, by what principles, with what intention, in what degrees, after what manner, *ut bonum bene fiat*, “that the good thing be done well.” This, therefore, must be presupposed: we must take care that even our bodies bear a part in our spiritual services. Our voice and tongue, our hands and our feet, and our very bowels must be servants of God, and do the work of the commandments.

This being ever supposed, our question is, how much more we must do? and the first measure is this,—whatsoever can be signified and ministered to by the body, the heart and the spirit of a man must be the principal actor. We must not give alms without a charitable soul, nor suffer martyrdom but in love and in obedience; and when we say our prayers, we do but mispend our time, unless our mind ascend up to God on the wings of desire.

Desire is the life of prayer; and if you indeed desire what you pray for, you will also labour for what you desire: and if you find it otherwise with yourselves, your coming to church is but like the Pharisees going up to the temple to pray. If your heart be not present, neither will God; and then there is a sound of men and women between a pair of dead walls, from whence, because neither God nor our souls are present, you must needs go home without a blessing.

But this measure of evangelical righteousness is of principal remark in all the rites and solemnities of religion; and intends to say this, that Christian religion is something that is not seen, it is the hidden man of the heart; *ἐστὶ τις Θεὸς ἔνδον*, "it is God that dwells within;" and true Christians are men, who, as the Chaldee oracle said, are "clothed with a great deal of mind." And, therefore, those words of the prophet Hosea, 'I will speak unto his heart,' is a proverbial expression, signifying to speak spiritual comforts, and, in the mystical sense, signifies *εὐαγγελίζειν*, 'to preach the gospel:' where the Spirit is the preacher, and the heart is the disciple, and the sermon is of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Our service to God must not be in outward works and scenes of religion, it must be something by which we become like to God; the Divine prerogative must extend beyond the outward man, nay, even beyond the mortification of corporal vices; the Spirit of God must mollify all our secret pride, and ingenerate in us a true humility, and a Christian meekness of spirit, and a divine charity. For in the gospel, when God enjoins any external rite or ceremony, the outward work is always the less principal.

For there is a bodily and a carnal part, an outside, and a cabinet of religion in Christianity itself. When we are baptized, the purpose of God is, that we cleanse ourselves from all pollution of the flesh and spirit, and then we are, indeed, καθαροὶ ὅλοι, "clean all over." And when we communicate, the commandment means that we should be made one spirit with Christ, and should live on him, believing his word, praying for his Spirit, supported with his hope, refreshed by his promises, recreated by his comforts, and wholly, and in all things, conformable to his life: that is the true communion. The sacraments are made for sinners, until they do repent; they are the food of our souls, but our souls must be alive unto God, or else they cannot eat. It is good to 'confess our sins,' as St. James says, and to open our wounds to the ministers of religion; but they absolve none but such as are truly penitent.

Solemn prayers, and the sacraments, and the assemblies of the faithful, and fasting days, and acts of external worship, are the solemnities and rites of religion; but the religion of a Christian is in the heart and spirit. And this is that by which Clemens Alexandrinus defined the righteousness of a Christian, "all the parts and faculties that make up a man, must make up our religion:"¹ but the heart is *domus principalis*, it is "the court" of the great King; and he is properly served with interior graces and moral virtues, with a humble and a good mind, with a bountiful heart and a willing soul, and these will command the eye, and give laws to the hand, and make the shoulders stoop; but "a

¹ Δικαιοσύνη συμφωνία τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μερῶν.

man's soul is the man,"¹ and so is his religion ; and so you are bound to understand it.

True it is, God works in us his graces by the sacrament ; but we must dispose ourselves to a reception of the Divine blessing by moral instruments. The soul is *συνεργὸς τῷ Θεῷ*, 'it must work together with God ;' and the body works together with the soul : but no external action can purify the soul, because, its nature and operations being spiritual, it can no more be changed by a ceremony or an external solemnity, than an angel can be caressed with sweetmeats, or a man's belly can be filled with music or long orations. The sum is this: no Christian does his duty to God but he that serves him with all his heart : and although it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness, even the external also ; yet that which makes us gracious in his eyes, is not the external ; it is the love of the heart, and the real change of the mind, and obedience of the spirit ; that is the first great measure of the righteousness evangelical.

2. The righteousness evangelical must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees by extension of our obedience to things of the same signification. There must be a commentary of kindness in understanding the laws of Christ. We must understand all God's meaning ; we must secure his service ; we must be far removed from the dangers of his displeasure ; and, therefore, our righteousness must be the purification and the perfection of the spirit. So that it will be nothing for us not to commit adultery, unless our eyes and hands be chaste, and the desires be clean. A Christian must not look

¹ Anima cujusque est quisque.

on a woman to lust after her. He must hate sin in all dimensions, and in all distances, and in every angle of its reception. A Christian must not sin, and he must not be willing to sin if he durst. He must not be lustful, and therefore he must not feed high, nor drink deep, for these make provisions for lust: and, amongst Christians, great eatings and drinkings are acts of uncleanness as well as of intemperance; and whatever ministers to sin, and is the way of it, it partakes of its nature and its curse.

For it is remarkable that in good and evil the case is greatly different. Mortification (e. g.) is a duty of Christianity; but there is no law concerning the instruments of it. We are not commanded to roll ourselves on thorns, as St. Benedict did; or to burn our flesh, like St. Martinian; or to tumble in snows, with St. Francis; or in pools of water, with St. Bernard. A man may chew aloes, or lie on the ground, or wear sackcloth, if he have a mind to it, and if he finds it good in his circumstances and to his purposes of mortification; but, it may be, he may do it alone by the instrumentalities of fear and love; and so the thing be done, no special instrument is under a command. But although the instruments of virtue are free, yet instruments and ministries of vice are not. Not only the sin is forbidden, but all the ways that lead to it. The instruments of virtue are of themselves indifferent, that is, not naturally, but good only for their relation's sake, and in order to their end. But the instruments of vice are of themselves vicious; they are part of the sin, they have a share in the fantastic pleasure, and they begin to estrange a man's heart from God, and are directly in the prohibition.

For we are commanded to fly from temptation, to pray against it, 'to abstain from all appearances of evil,' 'to make a covenant with our eyes,' 'to pluck them out,' if there be need. And if Christians do not understand the commandments to this extension of signification, they will be innocent only by the measures of human laws, but not by the righteousness of God.

3. Of the same consideration it is also that we understand Christ's commandments to extend our duty, not only to what is named, and what is not named of the same nature and design; but that we abstain from all such things as are like to sins. Of this nature there are many. All violences of passion, irregularities in gaming, prodigality of our time, indecency of action, doing things unworthy of our birth or our profession, aptness to go to law; *ambitus*, or a fierce prosecution even of honourable employments; misconstruction of the words and actions of our brother; easiness to believe evil of others; willingness to report the evil which we hear; curiosity of diet, peevishness towards servants, indiscreet and importune standing for place, and all excess in ornaments; for even this little instance is directly prohibited by the Christian and royal law of charity. For ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται, saith St. Paul; the word is a word hard to be understood; we render it well enough, 'charity vaunteth not itself;' and on this St. Basil says, that an ecclesiastic person (and so every Christian in his proportion) ought not to go in splendid and vain ornaments: "Every thing that is not wisely useful or proportioned to the state of the Christian, but ministers only to vanity, it is a part of this

περπερεύεσθαι,"¹ it is a 'vaunting,' which the charity and the grace of a Christian does not well endure. These things are like to sins; they are of a suspicious nature, and not easily to be reconciled to the righteousness evangelical. It is no wonder if Christianity be nice and curious; it is the cleanness and the purification of the soul, and Christ intends to present his church to God ἄσπιλον καὶ ἀμώμητον, 'without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.' N.B. *or any such thing.* If there be any irregularity that is less than a wrinkle, the evangelical righteousness does not allow it. These are such things, which, if men will stand to defend, possibly a modest reprover may be more ashamed than an impudent offender. If I see a person apt to quarrel, to take every thing in an ill sense, to resent an error deeply, to reprove it bitterly, to remember it tenaciously, to repeat it frequently, to upbraid it unhandsomely, I think I have great reason to say, that this person does not do what becomes the sweetness of a Christian spirit. If it be replied, it is no where forbidden to chide an offending person, and that it cannot be a fault to understand when a thing is said or done amiss; I cannot return an answer, but by saying, that suppose nothing of it were a sin, yet that every thing of it is so like a sin, that it is the worse for it; and that it were better not to do so; at least I think so, and so ought you too, if you be curious of your eternal interest: a little more tenderness here would do well. I cannot say that this dress, or this garment, or this standing for place, is the direct sin of

¹ Πᾶν γὰρ ὁ μὴ διὰ χρείαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ καλλωπισμὸν παραλαμβάνεται, περπερείας ἔχει κατηγορίαν.

pride; but I am sure it looks like it in some persons; at least, the letting it alone is much better, and is very like humility. And certain it is, that he is dull of hearing who understands not the voice of God, unless it be clamorous in an express and a loud commandment, proclaimed with trumpets and clarions on Mount Sinai; but a willing and an obedient ear understands the still voice of Christ, and is ready to obey his meaning at half a word; and that is the righteousness evangelical. It not only abstains from sins named, and sins implied, but from the beginnings and instruments of sin; and from whatsoever is like it. The Jews were so great haters of swine on pretensions of the Mosaic rites, that they would not so much as name a swine, but called it דבר אחר, *daber acher*, another thing. And thus the Romans, in their auguries, used *alterum* for *non bonum*. The simile of this St. Paul translates to a Christian duty: 'Let not fornication be so much as named among you, ὡς πρέπον ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις, as is commonly amongst Christians;' that is, come not near a foul thing; speak not of it; let it be wholly banished from all your conversation; for this niceness and curiosity of duty 'becometh saints,' and is an instance of the righteousness evangelical.

I have now done with the first sort of measures of the Christian righteousness: these, which are the matter of our negative duty, these are the measures of our caution and our first innocence. But there are greater things behind, which although I must crowd up into a narrow room, yet I must not wholly omit them: therefore,

4. The fourth thing I shall note to you is, that whereas the righteousness of the Pharisees was but

a fragment of the broken tables of Moses; the pursuance of some one grace, "a piece of the robe of righteousness;" the righteousness evangelical must be like Christ's seamless coat, all of a piece from the top to the bottom; it must invest the whole soul: Misma, Dumah, Massah, said the proverb of the rabbins; it is this, and it is the other, and it must be all, it must be a universal righteousness; not a little knot of holy actions scattered in our lives, and drawn into a sum at the day of judgment, but it must be a state of holiness. It was said of the Paphlagonian pigeons, "every one of them had two hearts;"¹ but that in our mystical theology signifies a wicked man. So said Solomon, 'The perverse or wicked man is a man of two ways;' *ἀνὴρ δίψυχος*, so St. James expresses an unbeliever; a man that will and will not; something he does for God, and something for the world; he hath two minds; and in a good fit, in his well days, he is full of repentance, and overflows in piety; but the paroxysm will return in the day of temptation, and then he is gone infallibly. But know this, that in the righteousness evangelical, one duty cannot be exchanged for another, and three virtues will not make amends for one remaining vice. He that oppresses the poor, cannot make amends by giving good counsel; and if a priest be simoniacal, he cannot be esteemed righteous before God by preaching well, and taking care of his charge. To be zealous for God and for religion is good, but that will not legitimate cruelty to our brother. It is not enough for a man to be a good citizen, unless he be also a good man; but some men build their

¹ Διπλῆν ὁρᾶσθαι τὴν καρδίαν.

houses with half a dozen cross sticks, and turf is the foundation, and straw is the covering, and they think they dwell securely; their religion is made up of two or three virtues, and they think to commute with God, some good for some bad; as if one deadly wound were not enough to destroy the most healthful constitution in the world. Deceive not yourselves. It is all one on which hand we fall:

— — — Unum operantur
Et calor et frigus: sic hoc, sic illud adurit;
Sic tenebræ visum, sic sol contrarius aufert.

"The moon may burn us by night as well as the sun by day; and a man may be made blind by the light of the sun as well as by the darkness of the evening;" and any one great mischief is enough to destroy one man. Some men are very meek and gentle naturally, and that they serve God withal, they pursue the virtue of their nature: that is, they tie a stone at the bottom of the well, and that is more than needs; the stone will stay there without that trouble; and this good inclination will of itself easily proceed to issue; and, therefore, our care and caution should be more carefully employed in mortification of our natures, and acquist of such virtues to which we are more refractory, and then cherish the other too, even as much as we please; but, at the same time we are busy in this, it may be, we are secret adulterers, and that will spoil our confidences in the goodness of the other instance. Others are greatly bountiful to the poor, and love all mankind, and hurt nobody but themselves; but it is a thousand pities to see such loving, goodnatured persons to perish infinitely by one crime, and to see such excellent good things

thrown away to please an uncontrolled and a stubborn lust; but so do some escape out of a pit, and are taken in a trap at their going forth; and stepping aside to avoid the hoar-frost, fall into a valley full of snow. The righteousness evangelical is another kind of thing: it is a holy conversation, a god-like life, a universal obedience, a keeping nothing back from God, a sanctification of the whole man; and keeps not the body only, but the soul and the spirit, unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus.

5. And lastly: the pharisaical righteousness was the product of fear, and, therefore, what they must they needs do, that they would do; but no more: but the righteousness evangelical is produced by love, it is managed by choice, and cherished by delight and fair experiences. Christians are a willing people; *homines bonæ voluntatis*, 'men of good will;' *arbores Domini*: so they are mystically represented in Scripture; 'the trees of the Lord are full of sap;' among the Hebrews the trees of the Lord did signify such trees as grew of themselves; and all that are of God's planting, are such as have a vital principle within, and grow without constraint.¹ One said it of Christians: "They obey the laws, and by the goodness of their lives exceed the laws:"¹ and certain it is, no man hath the righteousness evangelical, if he resolves always to take all his liberty in every thing that is merely lawful; or if he purpose to do no more than he must needs, that is, no more than he is just commanded. For the reasons are plain.

¹ Πείθονται τοῖς ὠρισμένοις νόμοις, καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις βίοις
μικῶσι τοὺς νόμους.

1. The Christian that resolves to do every thing that is lawful, will many times run into danger and inconvenience; because the utmost extremity of lawful is so near to that which is unlawful, that he will often pass into unlawful undiscernibly. Virtues and vices have not, in all their instances, a great landmark set between them, like warlike nations separate by prodigious walls, vast seas, and portentous hills; but they are oftentimes like the bounds of a parish; men are fain to cut a cross on the turf, and make little marks and annual perambulations for memorials; so it is in lawful and unlawful; by a little mistake a man may be greatly ruined. He that drinks till his tongue is full as a sponge, and his speech a little stammering and tripping, hasty and disorderly, though he be not gone as far as drunkenness, yet he is gone beyond the severity of a Christian; and when he is just past into unlawful, if he disputes too curiously, he will certainly deceive himself for want of a wiser curiosity.

But 2. He that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully, had need have an infallible guide always by him, who should, without error, be able to answer all cases of conscience, which will happen every day in a life so careless and insecure; for if he should be mistaken, his error is his crime, and not his excuse. A man in this case had need be very sure of his proposition; which because he cannot be, in charity to himself, he will quickly find that he is bound to abstain from all things that are uncertainly good, and from all disputable evils, from things which, although they may be in themselves lawful, yet, accidentally, and that from a thousand causes, may become unlawful. "A

Christian, saith Salvian, is afraid of every little thing; and he sometimes greatly fears that he hath sinned, even then when he hath no other reason to be afraid, but because he would not do so for all the world."¹

3. He that resolves to use all his liberty, cannot be innocent, so long as there are in the world so many bold temptations, and presumptuous actions, so many scandals and so much ignorance in the things of God, so many things that are suspicious, and so many things that are of evil report; so many ill customs and disguises in the world, with which if we resolve to comply in all that is supposed lawful, a man may be in the regions of death, before he perceive his head to ache; and, instead of a staff in his hand, may have a splinter in his elbow.

4. Besides all this; he that thus stands on his terms with God, and so carefully husbands his duty, and thinks to make so good a market of obedience, that he will quit nothing which he thinks he may lawfully keep, shall never be exemplary in his life, and shall never grow in grace, and therefore shall never enter into glory. He, therefore, that will be righteous by the measures evangelical, must consider not only what is lawful, but what is expedient; not only what is barely safe, but what is worthy; that which may secure, and that which may do advantage to that concern that is the greatest in the world.

And, the case is very like with them that resolve to do no more good than is commanded them.

¹ *Pavidus quippe et formidolosus est Christianus, atque in tantum peccare metuens, ut interdum et non timenda formidet.*

For, 1. It is infinitely unprofitable as to our eternal interest, because no man does do all that is commanded at all times; and, therefore, he that will not sometimes do more, besides that he hath no love, no zeal of duty, no holy fires in his soul; besides this, I say, he can never make any mends towards the reparation of his conscience. 'Let him that stole, steal no more;' that is well: but that is not well enough; for he must, if he can, make restitution of what he stole, or he shall never be pardoned; and so it is in all our intercourse with God. To do what is commanded is the duty of the present; we are tied to this in every present, in every period of our lives; but, therefore, if we never do any more than just the present duty, who shall supply the deficiencies, and fill up the gaps, and redeem what is past? This is a material consideration in the righteousness evangelical.

But then, 2. We must know, that in keeping of God's commandments, every degree of internal duty is under the commandments; and, therefore, whatever we do, we must do it as well as we can. Now he that does his duty with the biggest affection he can, will also do all that he can; and he can never know that he hath done what is commanded, unless he does all that is in his power. For God hath put no limit but love and possibility; and therefore whoever says, Hither will I go, and no further; this I will do, and no more; thus much will I serve God, but that shall be all; he hath the affections of a slave, and the religion of a Pharisee, the craft of a merchant, and the falseness of a broker; but he hath not the proper measures of the righteousness evangelical. But so it happens in the mud and slime of the river Borborus, when

the eye of the sun hath long dwelt on it, and produces frogs and mice which begin to move a little under a thin cover of its own parental matter, and if they can get loose to live half a life, that is all; but the hinder parts, which are not formed before the setting of the sun, stick fast in their beds of mud, and the little moiety of a creature dies before it could be well said to live: so it is with those Christians, who will do all that they think lawful, and will do no more than what they suppose necessary; they do but peep into the light of the sun of righteousness; they have the beginnings of life; but their hinder parts, their passions and affections, and the desires of the lower man, are still unformed; and he that dwells in this state, is just so much of a Christian, as a sponge is of a plant, and a mushroom of a shrub: they may be as sensible as an oyster, and discourse at the rate of a child, but are greatly short of the righteousness evangelical.

I have now done with those parts of the Christian righteousness, which were not only a *ὑπεροχή*, or "excess," but an *ἀντιστοιχείωσις*, "opposite in principle," to the pharisaical: but because I ought not to conceal any thing from you that must integrate our duty, and secure our title to the kingdom of heaven; there is this to be added, that this precept of our blessed Saviour is to be extended to the direct degrees of our duty. We must do more duties, and we must do them better. And in this, although we can have no positive measures, because they are potentially infinite, yet therefore we ought to take the best, because we are sure the greatest is not too big; and we are not sure that God will accept a worse, when we can do a better. Now although this is to be understood of the internal affection

only, because that must never be abated, but God is at all times to be loved and served with all our heart; yet concerning the degrees of external duty, as prayers, and alms, and the like, we are certainly tied to a greater excellency in the degree, than was that of the Scribes and Pharisees. I am obliged to speak one word for the determination of this inquiry, namely, to how much more of external duty Christians are obliged, than was in the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. In order to this, briefly thus.

I remember that Salvian, speaking of old men summing up their repentances, and making amends for the sins of their whole life, exhorts them to alms and works of piety; but inquiring how much they should do towards the redeeming of their souls, answers with a little sarcasm, but plainly enough to give a wise man an answer: "A man," says he, "is not bound to give away all his goods, unless, peradventure, he owes all to God; but, in that case, I cannot tell what to say; for then the case is altered. A man is not bound to part with all his estate; that is, unless his sins be greater than his estate; but if they be, then he may consider of it again, and consider better. And he need not part with it at all, unless pardon be more precious to him than his money, and unless heaven be worth it all, and unless he knows justly how much less will do it. If he does, let him try his skill, and pay just so much and no more than he owes to God: but if he does not know, let him be sure to do enough." His meaning is this: not that a man is bound to give all that he hath, and leave his children beggars; he is bound from that by

another obligation. But as when we are tied to pray continually, the meaning is, we should consecrate all our time by taking good portions out of all our time for that duty; the devoutest person being like the waters of Siloam,¹ a perpetual spring, but not a perpetual current; that is always in readiness, but actually thrusting forth his waters at certain periods every day: so out of all our estate we must take for religion and repentance such portions as the whole estate can allow; so much as will consecrate the rest; so much as is fit to bring when we pray for a great pardon, and deprecate a mighty anger, and turn aside an intolerable fear, and will purchase an excellent peace, and will reconcile a sinner. Now in this case a Christian is to take his measures according to the rate of his contrition and his love, his religion and his fear, his danger and his expectation, and let him measure his amends wisely; his sorrow pouring in, and his fear thrusting it down; and it were very well, if his love also would make it run over. For, deceive not yourselves, there is no other measure but this; so much good as a man does, or so much as he would do, if he could, so much of religion, and so much of repentance he hath, and no more: and a man cannot ordinarily know that he is in a savable condition, but by the testimony which a divine philanthropy and a good mind always gives, which is to omit no opportunity of doing good in our several proportions and possibilities.

¹ S. Hier. in Comment. Isai. viii. Isidor. lib. xiii. Orig. cap. 13.

There was an alms which the Scribes and Pharisees were obliged by the law to give, the tenth of every third year's increase; this they always paid, and this sort of alms is called δικαιοσύνη "righteousness" or "justice;" but the alms which Christians ought to give, is χάρις, and it is ἀγάπη, it is "grace," and it is "love," and it is abundance; and so the old rabbins told: *Justitia propriè dicitur in iis quæ jure facimus; benignitas in iis quæ præter jus.* "It is more than righteousness, it is bounty and benignity;" for that is the Christian measure. And so it is in the other parts and instances of the righteousness evangelical. And therefore it is remarkable that the saints in the Old Testament were called εὐθεῖς, "right men;" and the book of Genesis, as we find it twice attested by St. Jerome, was called by the ancient Hellenists, βιβλος εὐθέων, "the book of right or just men," the book of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.¹ But the word for Christians is χρηστοί, "good" men, harmless, and profitable; men that are good, and men that do good. In pursuance of which it is further observed by learned men, that the word ἀρετή, or "virtue," is not in the four gospels; for the actions of Christ's disciples should not be in *gradu virtutis* only, virtuous and laudable; such as these Aristotle presses in his *Magna Moralia*: they must pass on to a further excellency than so: the same which he calls πράξεις τῶν ἡρώων, "heroic actions," they must be sometimes, and as often as they can, in *gradu heroico*; or, that I may use the Christian style, they must be "actions of perfection." 'Righteousness' was the synonyme for 'alms' in the Old Testament,

¹ Comment, in Isai. xii. and lib. vi. in Ezek. xviii.

--and τελειότης, or 'perfection,' was the word for 'alms' in the New; as appears by comparing the fifth of St. Matthew and the sixth of St. Luke together; and that is the full state of this difference in the inquiries of the righteousness pharisaical and evangelical.

I have many more things to say, but ye cannot hear them now, because the time is past. One thing indeed were fit to be spoken of, if I had any time left; but I can only name it, and desire your consideration to make it up. This great rule that Christ gives us, does also, and that principally too, concern churches and commonwealths, as well as every single Christian. Christian parliaments must exceed the religion and government of the sanhedrim. Your laws must be more holy, the condition of the subjects be made more tolerable, the laws of Christ must be strictly enforced; you must not suffer your great Master to be dishonoured, nor his religion dismembered by sects, or disgraced by impiety; you must give no impunity to vicious persons, and you must take care that no great example be greatly corrupted; you must make better provisions for your poor than they did, and take more care even of the external advantages of Christ's religion and his ministers, than they did of the priests and Levites; that is, in all things you must be more zealous to promote the kingdom of Christ, than they were for the ministries of Moses.

The sum of all is this: the righteousness evangelical is the same with that which the ancients called ἀποστολικήν διάγειν πολιτείαν, "to live an apostolical life;" that was the measure of Christians; the οἱ ἐνυρέτως καὶ θεαρέστως βιοῦντες, "men that

desired to please God ;" that is, as Apostolius most admirably describes it,¹ men who are curious of their very eyes, temperate in their tongue, of a mortified body, and a humble spirit, pure in their intentions, masters of their passions ; men who, when they are injured, return honourable words : when they are lessened in their estates, increase in their charity ; when they are abused, they yet are courteous, and give entreaties ; when they are hated they pay love ; men that are dull in contentions, and quick in loving-kindnesses, swift as the feet of Asahel,² and ready as the chariots of Amminadib ;³ True Christians are such as are crucified with Christ, and dead unto all sin, and finally place their whole love on God, and, for his sake, on all mankind : this is the description of a Christian, and the true state of the righteousness evangelical ; so that it was well said of Athenagoras, " No Christian is a wicked man, unless his life be a continual lie,"⁴ unless he be false to God and his religion. For the righteousness of the gospel is, in short, nothing else but a transcript of the life of Christ : Christ is the image of God, and every Christian is the image of Christ, whose example is imitable ; but it is the best, and his laws are the most perfect, but the most easy ; and the promises by which he invites our greater services, are most excellent, but most true ; and the rewards shall be hereafter, but they shall

¹ Ἔστι δὲ αὐτὴ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀκρίβεια, γλώσσης ἐγκράτεια, σώματος δουλαγωγία, φρόνημα ταπεινὸν, ἐννοίας καθαρότης, ὁργῆς ἀφανισμὸς· ἀγγαρεύομενος προτίθει, ἀποστεροῦμενος μὴ δικάζου, μισοῦμενος ἀγάπα, βιαζόμενος ἀνέχου, βλασφημοῦμενος παρακάλει, νεκρώθητι τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, συσταυρώθητι τῷ Χριστῷ, ὅλην τὴν ἀγάπην μετὰθες ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον.

² 2 Sam. ii. 18.

³ Song of Sol. vi. 12.

⁴ Οὐδεὶς Χριστιανὸς πονηρὸς, εἰ μὴ ὑποκρίνεται τὸν λόγον.
—Legat. pro Christianis.

abide for ever; and, that I may take notice of the last words of my text, the threatenings to them that fall short of this righteousness, are most terrible, but most certainly shall come to pass; ‘they shall never enter into the kingdom of heaven;’ that is, their portion shall be shame and an eternal prison, *ἀσφαλτῶδες ῥεῦμα*, “a flood of brimstone,” and a cohabitation with devils to eternal ages; and if this consideration will not prevail, there is no place left for persuasion, and there is no use of reason, and the greatest hopes and the greatest fears can be no argument or sanction of laws; and the greatest good in the world is not considerable, and the greatest evil is not formidable: but if they be, there is no more to be said; if you would have your portion with Christ, you must be righteous by his measures: and these are they that I have told you

SERMON VI.

THE CHRISTIAN'S CONQUEST OVER THE BODY
OF SIN.

ROMANS, VII. 19.

*For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil
which I would not, that I do.*

WHAT the eunuch said to Philip, when he read the book of the prophet Isaiah, 'Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or some other man?' the same question I am to ask concerning the words of my text: Does St. Paul mean this of himself, or of some other? It is hoped that he speaks it of himself; and means, that though his understanding is convinced that he ought to serve God, and that he hath some imperfect desires to do so, yet the law of God without is opposed by a law of sin within. We have a corrupted nature, and a body of infirmity, and our reason dwells in the dark, and we must go out of the world before we leave our sin. For besides that some sins are esteemed brave and honourable, and he is a baffled person that dares not kill his brother like a gentleman; our very tables are made a snare, and our civilities are direct treasons to the soul. You cannot entertain your friend, but excess is the

measure; and that you may be very kind to your guest, you step aside, and lay away the Christian; your love cannot be expressed, unless you do him an ill turn, and civilly invite him to a fever. Justice is too often taught to bow to great interests, and men cannot live without flattery; and there are some trades that minister to sin, so that without a sin we cannot maintain our families; and if you mean to live, you must do as others do. Now so long as men see they are like to be undone by innocence, and that they can no way live but by compliance with the evil customs of the world, men conclude practically, because they must live, they must sin; they must live handsomely, and, therefore, must do some things unhandsomely; and so on the whole matter sin is unavoidable. Fain they would, but cannot tell how to help it. But since it is no better, it is well it is no worse. For it is St. Paul's case, no worse man: he would and he would not, he did and he did not; he was willing, but he was not able; and, therefore, the case is clear, that if a man strives against sin, and falls unwillingly, it shall not be imputed to him; he may be a regenerate man for all that. A man must, indeed, wrangle against sin when it comes, and, like a peevish lover, resist and consent at the same time, and then all is well; for this not only consists with, but is a sign of the state of regeneration.

If this be true, God will be very ill served. If it be not true, most men will have but small hopes of being saved, because this is the condition of most men. What then is to be done? Truth can do us no hurt; and, therefore, be willing to let this matter pass under examination; for if it trouble us

now, it will bring comfort hereafter. And, therefore, before I enter into the main inquiry, I shall, by describing the state of the man of whom St. Paul speaks here, tell you plainly, who it is that is in this state of sad things; and then do ye make your resolutions, according as you shall find it necessary for the saving of your souls, which, I am sure, ought to be the end of all preaching.

The man St. Paul speaks of, is one that is 'dead,'¹ one that was 'deceived' and 'slain,'² one in whom 'sin was exceeding sinful,'³ that is, highly imputed, greatly malicious, infinitely destructive; he is one who is 'carnal, and sold under sin';⁴ he is one that sins against his 'conscience and his reason';⁵ he is one in whom 'sin dwells,' but the Spirit of God does not dwell; for 'no good thing dwells in him';⁶ he is one who is 'brought into captivity to the law of sin'; he is a servant of uncleanness, with his 'flesh and members serving the law of sin.'⁷ Now if this be a state of regeneration, I wonder what is, or can be, a state of reprobation! for though this be the state of nature, yet it cannot be the state of one redeemed by the Spirit of Christ; and, therefore, flatter not yourselves any more, that it is enough for you to have good desires and bad performances: never think that any sin can reign in you, and yet you be servants of God; that sin can dwell in you, and at the same time the Spirit of God can dwell in you too; or that life and death can abide together. The sum of affairs is this: 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit,

¹ Ver. 9.² Ver. 11.³ Ver. 13.⁴ Ver. 14.⁵ Ver. 16.⁶ Ver. 18.⁷ Ver. 25.

do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live ;' ' but not else on any terms whatsoever.

My text is one of the hard places of St. Paul, which, as St. Peter says, ' the ignorant and the unstable wrest to their own damnation.' But because in this case the danger is so imminent, and the deception would be so intolerable, St. Paul, immediately after this chapter, (in which, under his own person, as was usual with him to do, he describes the state of a natural man advanced no further than Moses's law, and not redeemed by the blood of Christ, or enlightened by the Spirit of God, and taught by the wiser lessons and sermons of the gospel,) immediately spends the next chapter in opposing the evangelical state to the legal, the spiritual to the carnal, the Christian to the natural; and tells us plainly, he that is redeemed by the blood of Christ, is redeemed from the power of sin: he that is Christ's freed-man, is not a slave of sin, not captive to the devil at his will: he that is in 'the flesh, cannot please God,' but every servant of Christ is freed from sin, and is a servant of righteousness, and redeemed from all his vain conversation: for this is the end of Christ's coming, and cannot be in vain, unless we make it so. He came to bless us by turning every one of us from our iniquities. Now concerning this, besides the evidence of the thing itself, that St. Paul does not speak these words of himself, but by a μετασχηματισμὸς, under his own borrowed person he describes the state of a carnal, unredeemed, unregenerate person, is expressly affirmed by St. Irenæus and Origen, by Tertullian and St. Basil, by Theodoret

¹ Rom. viii. 13.

and St. Chrysostom, by St. Jerome, and sometimes by St. Austin, by St. Ambrose and St. Cyril, by Macarius and Theophylact; and is indeed that true sense and meaning of these words of St. Paul, which words none can abuse or misunderstand, but to the great prejudice of a holy life, and the patronage of all iniquity

But for the stating of this great case of conscience, I shall first in short describe to you what are the proper causes, which place men and keep them in this state of a necessity of sinning; and, 2. I shall prove the absolute necessity of coming out of this condition, and quitting all our sin. 3. In what degree this is to be effected. 4. By what instruments this is to be done; and all these being practical, will, of themselves, be sufficient use to the doctrines, and need no other applicatory but a plain exhortation.

I. What are the causes of this evil, by which we are first placed, and so long kept, in a necessity of sinning, so that we cannot do what good we would, nor avoid the evil that we hate?

The first is the evil state of our nature. And, indeed, he that considers the daily experiment of his own weak nature, the ignorance and inconstancy of his soul, being like a sick man's leg, or the knees of infants, reeling and unstable by disease or by infirmity, and the perpetual leaven and germinations, the thrustings forth and swelling of his senses, running out like new wine into vapours and intoxicating activities, will readily confess, that though even in nature there may be many good inclinations to many instances of the divine commandments; yet it can go no further than this *velleity*, this desiring to do good, but is not able.

And it is on this account that Lactantius brings in the Pagan or natural man complaining, *Volo equidem non peccare, sed vincor; indutus enim sum carne fragili et imbecilla.*¹ This is very true; and I add only this caution: there is not in the corruption of our nature so much as will save us harmless, or make us excusable, if we sin against God. Natural corruption can make us criminal, but not innocent; for though by him that willingly abides in the state of mere nature, sin cannot be avoided, yet no man is in that state longer than he loves to be so; for the grace of God came to rescue us from this evil portion, and is always present, to give us a new nature, and create us over again: and, therefore, though sin is made necessary to the natural man by his impotency and fond loves, that is by his unregenerate nature; yet, in the whole constitution of affairs, God hath more than made it up by his grace, if we will make use of it. *In pueris elucet spes plurimorum, quæ dum emoritur ætate, manifestum est, non naturam defecisse, sed curam,* said Quintilian.² "We cannot tell what we are, or what we think, in our infancy; and when we can know our thoughts, we can easily observe that we have learned evil things by evil examples, and the corrupt manners of an evil conversation:" *Et ubi per socordiam vires, tempus, ingenium defluxere, naturæ infirmitas accusatur;*³ that, indeed, is too true: "We grow lazy, and wanton, and we lose our time, and abuse our parts, and do ugly things, and lay the fault wholly on our natural infir-

¹ I desire not to sin, but am overcome; for I am enclosed in frail and yielding flesh.

² Gesner, i. 1, 2.

³ Sallust. Bell. Jug. c. i.

mities:" but we must remember, that, all this time, it is a state of nature, a state of flesh and blood, which cannot enter into heaven. The natural man and the natural child are not the same thing in true divinity. The natural child indeed can do no good; but the natural man cannot choose but do evil; but it is because he will do so; he is not born in the second birth, and renewed in the baptism of the Spirit.

1. We have brought ourselves into an accidental necessity of sinning, by the evil principles which are sucked in by great parts of mankind. We are taught ways of going to heaven without forsaking our sins; of repentance without restitution; of being in charity without hearty forgiveness and without love; of believing our sins to be pardoned before they are mortified; of trusting in Christ's death without conformity to his life; of being in God's favour on the only account of being of such an opinion; and that when we are once in, we can never be out. We are taught to believe that the events of things do not depend on our crucifying our evil and corrupt affections, but on eternal and unalterable counsels; that the promises are not the rewards of obedience, but graces pertaining only to a few predestinates, and yet men are saints for all that; and that the laws of God are of the race of the giants, not to be observed by any grace or by any industry: this is the catechism of the ignorant and the profane: but, without all peradventure, the contrary propositions are the way to make the world better: but certainly they that believe these things, do not believe it necessary that we should eschew all evil: and no wonder then, if when men on these accounts slacken their industry and their care, they find sin still

prevailing, still dwelling within them, and still unconquerable by so slight and disheartened labours. For "every fool and every ignorant person is a child still:"¹ and it is no wonder that he who talks foolishly should do childishly and weakly.

2. To our weak and corrupted nature, and our foolish discourses, men do daily superinduce evil habits and customs of sinning. "An evil custom is a hook in the soul," said the father,² and draws it whither the devil pleases. When it comes to the *καρδία γεγυμνασμένη πλεονεξίαις*, as St. Peter's word is, 'a heart exercised with covetous practices,' then it is also *ἀσθενής*, it is 'weak,' and unable to do the good it fain would, or to avoid the evil, which in a good fit, it pretends to hate. This is so known, I shall not insist on it; but add this only, that wherever a habit is contracted, it is all one what the instance be; it is easy as delicious, as unalterable in virtue as in vice; for what helps nature brings to a vicious habit, the same and much more the Spirit of God, by his power and by his comforts, can do in a virtuous; and then we are well again. You see by this who are, and why they are, in this evil condition. The evil natures, and the evil principles, and the evil manners of the world, these are the causes of our imperfect willings and weaker actings in the things of God; and as long as men stay here, sin will be unavoidable. For even meat itself is loathsome to a sick stomach; and it is impossible for him that is heart-sick, to eat the most wholesome diet; and yet he that shall say eating is impossible, will be best confuted by seeing all the healthful men in the world eat heartily every day.

¹ Ἰδιώτης πᾶς καὶ ἀπαίδευτος τρόπον τινα παῖς ἐστί.

² Consuetudo mala tanquam hamus infixus animæ.

II. But what then? Cannot sin be avoided? Cannot a Christian mortify the deeds of the body? Cannot Christ redeem us, and cleanse us from all our sins? Cannot the works of the devil be destroyed? That is the next particular to be inquired of: Whether or no it be not necessary, and therefore very possible, for a servant of God to pass from this evil state of things, and not only hate evil but avoid it also?

‘He that saith he hath not sinned, is a liar;’ but what then? Because a man hath sinned, it does not follow he must do so always. “Hast thou sinned? do so no more,” said the wise Bensirach; and so said Christ to the poor paralytic, ‘Go, and sin no more.’ They were excellent words spoken by a holy prophet: ‘Let not the sinner say he hath not sinned; for God shall burn coals of fire on his head, that saith before the Lord God and his glory, I have not sinned.’ Well! that case is confessed; ‘All men have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ But is there no remedy for this? Must it always be so? and must sin for ever have the upper hand, and for ever baffle our resolutions, and all our fierce and earnest promises of amendment? God forbid. There was a time then, to come, and, blessed be God, it hath been long come: ‘Yet a little while,’ saith the prophet, ‘and iniquity shall be taken out of the earth, and righteousness shall reign among you.’ For that is in the day of Christ’s kingdom, the manifestation of the gospel. When Christ reigns in our hearts by his Spirit, Dagon and the ark cannot stand together; we cannot serve Christ and Belial. And as in the state of nature no good thing dwells within us; so, when Christ rules in us, no evil thing can abide; ‘For every

plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,' and cast away into the fires of consumption or purification. But how shall this come to pass, since we all find ourselves so infinitely weak and foolish? I shall tell you. 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven,' saith Christ. It is impossible to nature; it is impossible to them that are given to vanity; it is impossible for them that delight in the evil snare: but Christ adds, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.' What we cannot do for ourselves, God can do for us and with us. What nature cannot do, the grace of God can. So that the thing may be done; not indeed by ourselves, but 'the grace of God that is with me,' saith St. Paul; God and man together can do it. But if it can be done any way that God has put into our powers, the consequent is this; no man's good will shall be taken in exchange for the real and actual mortification of his sins. He that sins, and would fain not sin, but sin is present with him whether he will or no, let him take heed; for the same is 'the law of sin,' and 'the law of death,' saith the apostle; and that man's heart is not right with God. For it is impossible men should pray for deliverance, and not be heard; that they should labour, and not be prosperous; unless they pray amiss, and labour falsely. Let no man, therefore, please himself with talking of great things with perpetual conversation in pious discourses, or with ineffective desires of serving God: he that does not practise as well as he talks, and do what he desires, and what he ought to do, confesses himself to sin greatly against his conscience; and it is

a prodigious folly to think that he is a good man, because, though he does sin, yet it was against his mind to do so. A man's conscience can never condemn him, if that be his excuse, to say that his conscience checked him; and that will be but a sad apology at the day of judgment. Some men talk like angels, and pray with great fervour, and meditate with deep recesses, and speak to God with loving affections, and words of union, and adhere to him in silent devotion, and when they go abroad are as passionate as ever, peevish as a frightened fly, vexing themselves with their own reflections: they are cruel in their bargains, unmerciful to their tenants, and proud as a barbarian prince; they are, for all their fine words, impatient of reproof, scornful to their neighbours, lovers of money, supreme in their own thoughts, and submit to none: all their spiritual life they talk of is nothing but spiritual fancy and illusion: they are still under the power of their passions, and their sin rules them imperiously, and carries them away infallibly. Let these men consider, there are some men think it impossible to do as much as they do: the common swearer cannot leave that vice, and talk well; and these men that talk thus well, think they cannot do as well as they talk: but both of them are equally under the power of their respective sins, and are equally deceived, and equally not the servants of God. This is true: but it is equally as true that there is no necessity for all this; for it ought, and it may be otherwise if we please: for, I pray, be pleased to hear St. Paul; 'Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh;' there is your remedy: 'for the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit;' there is the cause of

it; 'so that ye may not, or cannot do the things ye would;'¹ that is the blessed consequent and product of that cause. That is plainly,—As there is a state of carnality, of which St. Paul speaks in my text, so that in that state a man cannot but obey the flesh, so there is also a state of spirituality, when sin is dead, and righteousness is alive; and in this state the flesh can no more prevail, than the Spirit could do in the other. Some men cannot choose but sin; 'for the carnal mind is not subject to God, neither indeed can be,'² saith St. Paul; but there are also some men that cannot endure any thing that is not good. It is a great pain for a temperate man to suffer the disorders of drunkenness, and the shames of lust are intolerable to a chaste and modest person. This also is affirmed by St. John: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him.'³ So that, you see, it is possible for a good man not to commit the sin to which he is tempted. But the apostle says more: 'He doth not commit sin, neither indeed can he, because he is born of God.'

And this is agreeable to the words of our blessed Saviour: 'A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit;'⁴ that is, as the child of hell is carried to sin, *pleno impetu*, he does not check at it, he does it, and is not troubled; so, on the other side, a child of God is as fully convinced of righteousness; and that which is unrighteous is as hateful to him as colocynths to the taste, or the sharpest punctures to the pupil of the eye. We may see something

¹ Gal. v. 16.

² Rom. viii. 7.

³ 1 John, iii. 9.

⁴ Matt. vii. 18.

of this in common experiences. What man of ordinary prudence and reputation can be tempted to steal? or, for what price would he be tempted to murder his friend? If we did hate all sins as we hate these, would it not be as easy to be as innocent in other instances, as most men are in these? and we should have as few drunkards as we have thieves. In such as these, we do not complain, in the words of my text, 'What I would not, that I do; and what I would, I do not.' Does not every good man overcome all the power of great sins? and can he, by the Spirit of God and right reason, by fear and hope, conquer Goliath, and beat the sons of the giant; and can he not overcome the little children of Gath? or is it harder to overcome a little sin than a great one? Are not the temptations to little sins very little? and yet are they greater and stronger than a mighty grace? Could the poor demoniac, that lived in the graves, by the power of the devil break his iron chains in pieces? and cannot he, who hath the Spirit of God, dissolve the chains of sin? 'Through Christ that strengthens me, I can do all things,' saith St. Paul; *Satis sibi copiarum cum Publio Decio, et nunquam nimium hostium fore*, said one in Livy; which is best rendered by St. Paul:—'If God be with us, who can be against us?' Nay, there is a *ὑπερνικῶμεν* in St. Paul, 'We are more than conquerors.' For even amongst an army of conquerors there are degrees of exaltation: some serve God like the centurion, and some like St. Peter; some like Martha, and some like Mary: all good men conquer their temptation, but some with more ease, and some

with a clearer victory; ¹ and more than this,—“ We kill the viper, and make treacle of him; ” ² that is, not only escape from, but get advantages by, temptations. But we, commonly, are more afraid than hurt: ‘ Let us, therefore, lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us: ’ ³ so we read the words of the apostle; but St. Chrysostom’s rendition of them is better; for the word *εὐπερίστατος* is a perfect passive, and cannot signify the strength and irresistibility of sin on us, but quite the contrary, *εὐπερίστατος ἁμαρτία* signifies ‘ the sin that is so easily avoided, ’ as they that understand that language know very well. And if we were so wise and valiant as not to affright ourselves with our own terrors, we should quickly find, that by the help of the Spirit of God, we can do more than we thought we could. It was said of Alexander, *Bene ausus est vana contemnere*, ⁴ he did no great matter in conquering the Persians, because they were a pitiful and a soft people; only he understood them to be so, and was wise and bold enough not to fear such images and men of clouts. But men, in the matter of great sins and little, do as the magicians of Egypt: when Moses turned his rod into a serpent, it moved them not; but when they saw the lice and the flies, then they were afraid. We see, that, by the grace of God, we can escape great sins; but we start at flies, and a bird out of a bush disorders us; the lion in the way troubles us not, but a frog and a worm affright

¹ Μετ’ εὐκολίας ἀπάσης, ἄνευ πόνων καὶ ἰδρώτων.

² “ Non solum viperam terimus, sed ex ea antidotum concimus.”

³ Heb. xii. 1.

⁴ Liv. ix. 17.

us. Remember the saying of St. Paul, 'Christ came to redeem to himself a church, and to present it, pure and spotless, before the throne of grace;' and if you mean to be of this number, you must endeavour to be under this qualification, that is, as Paul laboured to be, 'void of offence, both towards God and towards man.' And so I have done with the second proposition: it is necessary that all sin, great and little, should be mortified and dead in us, and that we no longer abide in that state of slavery, as to say, 'The good that I would, I do not; but evil that I would not, that I do.'

III. In the next place, we are to inquire in what degree this is to be effected; for though in negatives, properly there are no degrees, yet, unless there be some allays in this doctrine, it will not be so well, and it may be, your experiences will for ever confute my arguments; for, 'Who can say that he is clean from his sin?' said the wise man. And, as our blessed Saviour said, 'He that is innocent among you all, let him throw the first stone at the sinner,' and spare not.

To this I answer, in the words of St. Gregory, All man's righteousness will be found to be unrighteous, if God should severely enter into judgment; but, therefore, even after our innocence we must pray for pardon, "that our innocence, which, in strictness of divine judgment, would be found spotted and stained, by the mercy of our Saviour may be accepted."¹ St. Bernard expresses this well: "Our humble righteousness is, perhaps,

¹ Ut quæ succumbere discussa poterat, ex iudicis pietate convalescat.

right in the eyes of God, but not pure ;”¹ that is, accepted by his mercy, but it is such as dares not contend in judgment. For as no man is so much a sinner, but he sometimes speaks a good word, or does some things not ill, and yet that little good interrupts not that state of evil ; so it is amongst very good men, from whom, sometimes, may pass something that is not commendable ; and yet their heart is so habitually right towards God, that they will do nothing, I do not say which God, in justice, cannot, but which in mercy, he will not, impute to eternal condemnation. It was the case of David ; ‘ he was a man after God’s own heart ;’ nay, it is said, ‘ he was blameless, save in the matter of Uriah ;’ and yet we know he numbered the people, and God was angry with him, and punished him for it ; but, because he was a good man, and served God heartily, that other fault of his was imputed to him no further. God set a fine on his head for it ; but it was *salvo contenemento*, “ the main stake was safe.”

For concerning good men, the question is not, whether or no God could not, in the rigour of justice, blame their indiscretion, or impute a foolish word, or chide them for a hasty answer, or a careless action, for a less devout prayer, or weak hands, for a fearful heart, or a trembling faith. These are not the measures by which God judges his children ; ‘ for he knoweth whereof we are made, and he remembers that we are but dust.’ But the question is, whether any man that is covetous or proud, false to his trust, or a drunkard, can, at the same

¹ Nostra siqua est humilis justitia, recta forsitan, sed non pura.

time, be a child of God? No, certainly he cannot. But then we know that God judges us by Jesus Christ, that is, with the allays of mercy, with an eye of pardon, with the sentences of a father, by the measures of a man, and by analogy to all our unavoidable abatements. God could enter with us into a more severe judgment, but he would not; and no justice tied him from exercising that mercy. But, according to the measures of the gospel, 'he will judge every man according to his works.' Now what these measures are, is now the question. To which I answer, first, in general, and then more particularly.

In general, thus: a Christian's innocence is always to be measured by the plain lines and measures of the commandments; but is not to be taken into account by uncertain and fond opinions, and the scruples of zealous and timorous persons. My meaning is this: some men tell us that every natural inclination to a forbidden object is a sin; which they that believe, finding them to be natural, do also confess that such sins are unavoidable. But if these natural and first motions be sins, then a man sins whether he resists them or resists them not, whether he prevails or prevails not; and there is no other difference but this—he that fights not against, but always yields to his desires, sins greatest; and he that never yields, but fights always, sins oftenest. But then, by this reckoning, it will indeed be impossible to avoid millions of sins; because the very doing of our duty supposes a sin. If God should impute such first desires to us as sins, we were all very miserable; but if he does not impute them, let us trouble ourselves no further about them, but to take care that they never

prevail on us. Thus men are taught, that they never say their prayers but they commit a sin. Indeed that is true but too often; but yet it is possible for us, by the grace of God, to please him in saying our prayers, and to be accepted of him. But, indeed, if God did proceed against us as we do against one another, no man could abide innocent for so much as one hour. But God's judgment is otherwise: he inquires if the heart be right, if our labour be true, if we love no sin, if we use prudent and efficacious instruments to mortify our sin, if we go about our religion as we go about the biggest concerns of our life, if we be sincere and real in our actions and intentions. For this is the *ἀναμαρτησία* that God requires of us all; this is that 'sinless state,' in which if God does not find us, we shall never see his glorious face; and if he does find us, we shall certainly be saved by the blood of Jesus. For, in the style of Scripture, to be *εὐλακρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι* is the same thing; 'to be sincere, and to be without offence,' is all one. Thus David spake heartily, 'I am utterly purposed that my mouth should not offend; and thou shalt find no wickedness in me.' He that endeavours this, and hopes this, and does actions and uses means accordingly, not being deceived by his own false heart, nor abused by evil propositions—this man will stand upright in the congregations of the just; and, though he cannot challenge heaven by merit, yet he shall receive it as a gift, by promise and by grace. God takes no judgment of us by any measures, but of the commandment without, and the heart and the conscience within; but he never intended his laws to be a snare to us, or to entrap us with consequences and dark interpretations, by

large deductions and witty similitudes of faults; but he requires of us a sincere heart, and a hearty labour in the work of his commandments; he calls on us to avoid all that which his law plainly forbids, and which our consciences do condemn. This is the general measure. The particulars are briefly these :—

1. Every Christian is bound to arrive at that state, that he have remaining in him no habit of any sin whatsoever. ‘Our old man must be crucified;’ ‘the body of sin must be destroyed;’ ‘he must no longer serve sin;’ ‘sin shall not have the dominion over you :’—All these are the apostle’s words; that is plainly, as I have already declared, you must not be at that pass, that though ye would avoid sin, ye cannot; for he that is so, is a most perfect slave, and Christ’s freedman cannot be so. Nay, he that loves sin, and delights in it, hath no liberty indeed; but he hath more show of it, than he that obeys it against his will. He that loves to be in the place, is a less prisoner than he that is confined against his will.

2. He that commits any one sin by choice and deliberation, is an enemy to God, and is under the dominion of the flesh. In the case of deliberate sins, one act does give the denomination; he is an adulterer, that so much as once foully breaks the holy laws of marriage. ‘He that offends in one, is guilty of all,’ saith St. James. St. Peter’s denial, and David’s adultery, had passed on to a fatal issue, if the mercy of God, and a great repentance, had not interceded. But they did so no more, and so God restored them to grace and pardon. And in this sense are the words of St. John, ‘*He that does a sin, is of the devil,*’ and ‘*he that is born of*

God, *does not commit a sin*;¹ he chooses none, he loves none, he endures none. A sin chosen and deliberately done, is, as Tertullian's expression is, *crimen devoratorium salutis*; "it devours salvation. For as there are some sins which can be done but once, as a man can kill his father but once, or himself but once, so in those things which can be repeated, a perfect choice is equivalent to a habit; it is the same in principle that a habit is in the product. In short, he is not a child of God, that knowingly and deliberately chooses any thing that God hates.

3. Every Christian ought to attain such a state of life, as that he never sin, not only by a long deliveration, but also not by passion. I do not say that he is not a good Christian, who by passion is suddenly surprised, and falls into folly; but this I say, that no passion ought to make him choose a sin. For, let the sin enter by anger or by desire, it is all one, if the consent be gained. It is an ill sign, if a man, though on the sudden, consents to a base action. Thus far every good man is tied, not only to endeavour, but to prevail against his sin.

4. There is one step more, which, if it be not actually effected, it must, at least, be greatly endeavoured, and the event be left to God; and that is, that we strive for so great a dominion over our sins and lust, as that we be not surprised on a sudden. This, indeed, is a work of time, and it is well if it be ever done; but it must always be endeavoured. But in this particular, even good men are sometimes unprosperous. St. Epiphanius and St. Chrysostom grew once into choler, and they

¹ 1 John, iii. 8.

passed too far, and lost more than their argument; they lost their reason, and they lost their patience; and Epiphanius wished that St. Chrysostom might not die a bishop; and he, in a peevish exchange, wished that Epiphanius might never return to his bishoprick: when they had forgotten their foolish anger, God remembered it, and said Amen to both their cursed speakings. Nay, there is yet a greater example of human frailty: St. Paul and Barnabas were very holy persons; but once, in a heat, they were both to blame; they were peevish, and parted company. This was not very much; but God was so displeased, even for this little fly in their box of ointment, that their story says they never saw one another's face again. These earnest emissions and transportations of passion do some time declare the weakness of good men; but that, even here, we ought, at least, to endeavour to be more than conquerors, appears in this, because God allows it not, and by punishing such follies, does manifest that he intends that we should get victory over our sudden passions, as well as our natural lusts. And so I have done with the third inquiry, in what degree God expects our innocence; and now I briefly come to the last particular, which will make all the rest practicable.

IV. I am now to tell you how all this can be effected, and how we shall get free from the power and dominion of our sins.

I. The first great instrument is faith. He that hath faith like a grain of mustard-seed can remove mountains; the mountains of sin shall fall flat at the feet of the faithful man, and shall be removed into the sea, the sea of Christ's blood, and penitential waters. 'Faith overcometh the world,' saith

St. John; and 'walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.' There are two of our enemies gone—the world and the flesh, by faith and the Spirit, by the spirit of faith; and, as for the devil, put on the shield of faith, and 'resist the devil, and he will flee from you,' saith the apostle; and the powers of sin seem insuperable to none, but to them that have not faith: we do not believe that God intends we should do what he seems to require of us; or else we think, that though God's grace abounds, yet sin must superabound, expressly against the saying of St. Paul; or else we think that the evil spirit is stronger than the good Spirit of God. Hear what St. John saith: 'My little children, ye are of God, and have overcome the evil one; for the Spirit that is in you is greater than that which is in the world.'¹ Believest thou this? If you do, I shall tell you what may be the event of it. When the father of the boy possessed with the devil told his sad story to Christ, he said, 'Master, if thou canst do any thing, I pray help me.' Christ answered him, 'If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth.'² N.B. And therefore, if you do believe this, go to your prayers, and go to your guards, and go to your labour, and try what God will do for you. 'For whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.' Now consider; do not we every day pray, in the divine hymn called *Te Deum*, "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin?" And in the collect at morning prayer, "and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of dan-

¹ 1 John, iv. 4.² Mark, ix. 23.

ger; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight?" Have you any hope or any faith, when you say that prayer? And if you do your duty as you can, do you think the failure will be on God's part? Fear not that, if you can trust in God, and do accordingly; 'though your sins were as scarlet, yet they shall be as white as snow,' and pure as the feet of the holy Lamb. Only let us forsake all those weak propositions, which cut the nerves of faith, and make it impossible for us to actuate all our good desires, or to come out from the power of sin.

2. He that would be free from the slavery of sin, and the necessity of sinning, must always watch. Aye, that is the point; but who can watch always? Why, every good man can watch always; and, that we may not be deceived in this, let us know, that the running away from a temptation is a part of our watchfulness, and every good employment is another great part of it, and a laying in provisions of reason and religion beforehand is yet a third part of this watchfulness; and the conversation of a Christian is a perpetual watchfulness; not a continual thinking of that one, or those many things, which may endanger us; but it is a continual doing something, directly or indirectly against sin. He either prays to God for his Spirit, or relies on the promises, or receives the sacrament, or goes to his bishop for counsel and a blessing, or to his priest for religious offices, or places himself at the feet of good men to hear their wise sayings, or calls for the church's prayers, or does the duty of his calling, or actually resists temptation, or frequently renews his holy purposes, or fortifies himself by

vows, or searches into his danger by a daily examination; so that, in the whole, he is ever on his guards. This duty and caution of a Christian is like watching, lest a man cut his finger. Wise men do not often cut their fingers, yet every day they use a knife; and a man's eye is a tender thing, and every thing can do it wrong, and every thing can put it out; yet because we love our eyes so well, in the midst of so many dangers, by God's providence and a prudent natural care, by winking when any thing comes against them, and by turning aside when a blow is offered, they are preserved so certainly, that not one man in ten thousand does, by a stroke, lose one of his eyes in all his lifetime. If we would transplant our natural care to a spiritual caution, we might, by God's grace, be kept from losing our souls, as we are from losing our eyes; and because a perpetual watchfulness is our great defence, and the perpetual presence of God's grace is our great security, and that this grace never leaves us, unless we leave it, and the precept of a daily watchfulness is a thing not only so reasonable, but so many easy ways to be performed—we see on what terms we may be quit of our sins, and more than conquerors over all the enemies and impediments of salvation.

3. If you would be in the state of the liberty of the sons of God, that is, that you may not be servants of sin in any instance, be sure, in the mortification of sin, willingly or carelessly to leave no remains of it, no nest-egg, no principles of it, no affections to it; if any thing remains, it will prove to us as manna to the sons of Israel on the second day; it will breed worms and stink. Therefore, labour against every part of it, reject every proposition that gives it coun-

tenance, pray to God against it all. And what then? Why then, 'ask, and you shall have,' said Christ. Nay, say some, it is true, you shall be heard, but in part only; for God will leave some remains of sin within us, lest we should become proud by being innocent. So vainly do men argue against God's goodness, and their own blessings and salvation; as St. Basil says; "They contrive witty arts to undo themselves, being entangled in the periods of ignorant disputations."¹ But as to the thing itself, if, by the remains of sin, they mean the propensities and natural inclinations to forbidden objects, there is no question but they will remain in us, so long as we bear our flesh about us; and, surely, that is a great argument to make us humble. But these are not the sins which God charges on his people. But if by remains we mean any part of the habit of sin, any affection, any malice or perverseness of the will, then it is a contradiction to say that God leaves in us such remains of sin, lest by innocence we become proud; for how should pride spring in a man's heart, if there be no remains of sin left? And is it not the best, the surest way, to cure the pride of our hearts, by taking out every root of bitterness, even the root of pride itself? Will a physician purposely leave the relics of a disease, and pretend he does it to prevent a relapse? And is it not more likely he will relapse, if the sickness be not wholly cured? But besides this, if God leaves any remains of sin in us, what remains are they, and of what sins? Does he leave the remains of pride? If so, that were a strange cure, to leave the

¹ Μετὰ πλείονος τέχνης, καὶ παρασκευῆς, καὶ πραγματίας ἀπώλλυνται.

remains of pride in us, to keep us from being proud. But if not so, but that all the remains of pride be taken away by the grace of God blessing our endeavours, what danger is there of being proud, the remains of which sin are by the grace of God wholly taken away? But then, if the pride of the heart be cured, which is the hardest to be removed, and commonly is done last of all,—who can distrust the power of the Spirit of God, or his goodness, or his promises, and say that God does not intend to cleanse his sons and servants from all unrighteousness; and, according to St. Paul's prayer, 'keep their bodies, and souls, and spirits unblameable to the coming of the Lord Jesus?' But, however, let God leave what remains he please, all will be well enough on that side; but let us be careful, as far as we can, that we leave none; lest it be severely imputed to us, and the fire break out and consume us.

4. Let us, without any further question, put this argument to a material issue; let us do all that we can do towards the destruction of the whole body of sin; but let us never say we can be quit of our sin, till we have done all that we can do towards the mortification of it; for till that be done, how can any man tell where the fault lies, or whether it can be done or no? If any man can say that he hath done all that he could do, and yet hath failed of his duty; if he can say truly that he hath endured as much as is possible to be endured,—that he hath watched always, and never nodded, when he could avoid it,—that he hath loved as much as he could love,—that he hath waited till he can wait no longer; then, indeed, if he says true, we must confess that it is not to be understood.

But is there any man in the world that does all that he can do? If there be, that man is blameless; if there be not, then he cannot say but it is his own fault that his sin prevails against him. It is true, that no man is free from sin; but it is as true, that no man does as much as he can against it: and, therefore, no man must go about to excuse himself by saying, No man is free from his sin; and therefore, no man can be, no, not by the powers of grace: for he may as well argue thus,—No man does do all that he can do against it, and therefore it is impossible he should do what he can do. The argument is apparently foolish, and the excuse is weak, and the deception visible, and sin prevails on our weak arguings; but the consequence is plainly this:—when any man commits a sin, he is guilty before God, and he cannot say he could not help it; and God is just in punishing every sin, and very merciful when he forgives us any. But he that says he cannot avoid it, that he cannot overcome his lust, confesses himself a servant of sin, and that he is not yet redeemed by the blood of the holy Lamb.

5. He that would be advanced beyond the power and necessity of sinning, must take great caution concerning his thoughts and secret desires; ‘for lust, when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin;’ but, if it be suppressed in the conception, it comes to nothing; but we find it hard to destroy the serpent when the egg is hatched into a cockatrice. The thought is *ἀμαρτυρὸς ἀμαρτία*; ¹ no man takes notice of it, but lets it alone till the sin be too strong; ²

¹ An unwitnessed sin.—ED.

² Ille laudatur, qui, ut cœperint, statim interficit cogitata, et allidit ad petram.

and then we complain we cannot help it. *Nolo sinas cogitationem crescere*, "Suffer not your thoughts to grow up;" for they usually come ἄφνω, ἐκρόπως, ἀπαραμειύτως, as St. Basil says, "suddenly, and easily, and without business;" but take heed that you nurse them not; but if you chance to stumble, mend your pace; and if you nod, let it awaken you; for he only can be a good man that raises himself up at the first trip, that strangles his sin in the birth: "Good men rise up again, even before they fall,"¹ saith St. Chrysostom. Now, I pray, consider that when sin is but in the thought, it is easily suppressed, and, if it be stopped there, it can go no further; and what great mountain of labour is it then to abstain from our sin? Is not the adultery of the eye easily cured by shutting the eye-lid! and cannot the thoughts of the heart be turned aside by doing business, by going into company, by reading, or by sleeping? A man may divert his thoughts by shaking of his head, by thinking any thing else, by thinking nothing. *Da mihi Christianum*, saith St. Austin, *et intelligit quod dico*: "Every man that loves God understands this, and more than this, to be true." Now if things be thus, and that we may be safe in that which is supposed to be the hardest of all, we must needs condemn ourselves, and lay our faces in the dust, when we give up ourselves to any sin; we cannot be justified by saying we could not help it. For as it was decreed by the fathers of the second Aurasian council: "This we believe according to the catholic faith; all that have received baptismal grace; all that are baptized by the aid and co-operation of Christ, must

¹ Τοιαῦται τῶν ἀγίων ψυχαί, πρὶν ἔπεσον, ἀνίστανται.

and can, if they will labour faithfully, perform and fulfil those things which belong unto salvation."¹

6. And lastly : if sin hath gotten the power of any one of us, consider in what degree the sin hath prevailed : if but a little, the battle will be more easy, and the victory more certain ; but then be sure to do it thoroughly, because there is not much to be done : but if sin hath prevailed greatly, then indeed you have very much to do ; therefore begin betimes, and defer not this work till old age shall make it extremely difficult, or death shall make it impossible. If thou beest cast behind ; if thou hast neglected the duties of thy vigorous age, thou shalt never overtake that strength ; the hinder wheel, though bigger than the former, and measures more ground at every revolution, yet shall never overtake it ; and all the second counsels of thy old age, though undertaken with greater resolution, and acted with the strengths of fear and need, and pursued with more pertinacious purposes than the early repentances of young men, yet shall never overtake those advantages which you lost when you gave your youth to folly, and the causes of a sad repentance.*

However, if you find it so hard a thing to get from the power of one master-sin ; if an old adulterer does dote, if an old drunkard be further from remedy than a young sinner, if covetousness grows with old age, if ambition be still more hydropic and grows more thirsty for every draught of honour,

¹ Hoc etiam secundum fidem catholicam credimus, &c.

² " Nam quamvis prope te, quamvis temone sub uno
Vertentem sese, frustra sectabere canthum,
Cum rota posterior curras, et in axe secundo."

Pers. v. 70.

you may easily resolve that old age, or your last sickness is not so likely to be prosperous in the mortification of your long prevailing sins. Do not all men desire to end their days in religion, to die in the arms of the church, to expire under the conduct of a religious man? When ye are sick or dying, then nothing but prayers and sad complaints, and the groans of tremulous repentance, and the faint labours of an almost impossible mortification: then the despised priest is sent for; then he is a good man, and his words are oracles, and religion is truth, and sin is a load, and the sinner is a fool; then we watch for a word of comfort from his mouth, as the fearful prisoner for his fate from the judge's answer. That which is true then, is true now; and, therefore, to prevent so intolerable a danger, mortify your sin betime, for else you will hardly mortify it at all. Remember that the snail outwent the eagle, and won the goal, because she set out betimes.

To sum up all: every good man is a new creature, and Christianity is not so much a divine institution, as a divine frame and temper of spirit; which if we heartily pray for, and endeavour to obtain, we shall find it as hard and as uneasy to sin against God, as now we think it impossible to abstain from our most pleasing sins. For as it is in the spermatic virtue of the heavens, which diffuses itself universally on all sublunary bodies, and subtly insinuating itself into the most dull and inactive element, produces gold and pearls, life and motion, and brisk activities in all things, that can receive the influence and heavenly blessing,—so it is in the Holy Spirit of God, and the word of God, and the grace of God, which St. John calls ‘the

seed of God ;' it is a law of righteousness, and it is a law of the Spirit of life, and changes nature into grace, and dulness into zeal, and fear into love, and sinful habits into innocence, and passes on from grace to grace, till we arrive at the full measures of the stature of Christ, and into the perfect liberty of the sons of God ; so that we shall no more say, 'The evil that I would not, that I do : ' but we shall hate what God hates ; and the evil that is forbidden, we shall not do ; not because we are strong of ourselves, but because Christ is our strength, and he is in us ; and Christ's strength shall be perfected in our weakness, and his grace will be sufficient for us ; and he will of his own good pleasure work in us, not only to will, but also to do, *velle et perficere*, saith the apostle, 'to will and to do it thoroughly' and fully, being sanctified throughout, to the glory of his holy name, and the eternal salvation of our souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord ; to whom, with the Father, &c.

SERMON VII.

FIDES FORMATA; OR, FAITH WORKING BY LOVE.

JAMES, II. 24.

You see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

THAT we are 'justified by faith,' St. Paul tells us;¹ that we are also 'justified by works,' we are told in my text; and both may be true. But that this justification is wrought by faith without works, 'to him that worketh not but believeth,' saith St. Paul: that this is not wrought without works, St. James is as express for his negative as St. Paul was for his affirmative; and how both these should be true, is something harder to unriddle. But "he that affirms must prove;"² and therefore St. Paul proves his doctrine by the example of Abraham, to whom faith was imputed for righteousness; and therefore, not by works. And what can be answered to this? Nothing but this, that St. James uses the very same argument to prove that our justification is by works also; 'For our father Abraham was justified by works, when he offered up his son Isaac.'³ Now

¹ Rom. iii. 28. iv. 5. v. 1. x. 10. Gal. ii. 16.

² Affirmanti incumbit probatio.

³ James ii. 19.

which of these says true? Certainly both of them; but neither of them have been well understood; in-somuch that they have not only made divisions of heart among the faithful, but one party relies on faith to the disparagement of good life, and the other makes works to be the main ground of our hope and confidence, and consequently to exclude the efficacy of faith: the one makes Christian religion a lazy and inactive institution, and the other a bold presumption on ourselves; while the first tempts us to live like heathens, and the other recalls us to live the life of Jews; while one says, 'I am of Paul,' and another, 'I am of St. James,' and both of them put in danger of evacuating the institution and the death of Christ; one looking on Christ only as a Lawgiver, and the other only as a Saviour. The effects of these are very sad, and by all means to be diverted by all the wise considerations of the Spirit.

My purpose is not with subtle arts to reconcile them that never disagreed; the two apostles spake by the same Spirit, and to the same last design, though to differing intermedial purposes: but because the great end of faith, the design, the definition, the state, the economy of it, is that all believers should not live according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit; before I fall to the close handling of the text, I shall premise some preliminary considerations, to prepare the way of holiness, to explicate the differing senses of the apostles, to understand the question and the duty, by removing the causes of the vulgar mistakes of most men in this article, and then proceed to the main inquiry.

. That no man may abuse himself or others by

mistaking of hard words, spoken in mystery, with allegorical expressions to secret senses, wrapped up in a cloud ; such as are ' faith, and justification, and imputation, and righteousness, and works : ' be pleased to consider, that the very word ' faith ' is, in Scripture, infinitely ambiguous, insomuch that in the Latin concordances of St. Jerome's Bible, published by Robert Stephens, you may see no less than twenty-two several senses and acceptations of the word ' faith,' set down with the several places of Scripture referring to them ; to which if, out of my own observation, I could add no more, yet these are an abundant demonstration that whatsoever is said of the efficacy of faith for justification, is not to be taken in such a sense as will weaken the necessity and our carefulness of good life, when the word may, in so many other senses, be taken to verify the affirmation of St. Paul, of ' justification by faith,' so as to reconcile it to ' the necessity of obedience.'

2. As it is in the word ' faith,' so it is in ' works ; for by works is meant sometimes the thing done, sometimes the labour of doing, sometimes the good will ; it is sometimes taken for a state of good life, sometimes for the covenant of works ; it sometimes means the works of the law, sometimes the works of the gospel ; sometimes it is taken for a perfect, actual, unsinning obedience, sometimes for a sincere endeavour to please God ; sometimes they are meant to be such which can challenge the reward as of debt ; sometimes they mean only a disposition of the person to receive the favour and the grace of God. Now since our good works can be but of one kind, (for ours cannot be meritorious, ours cannot be without sin all our life, they cannot

be such as need no repentance,) it is no wonder if we must be justified without works in this sense; for by such works no man living can be justified: and these St. Paul calls 'the works of the law,' and sometimes he calls them 'our righteousness;' and these are the covenant of works. But because we came into the world to serve God, and God will be obeyed, and Jesus Christ came into the world to save us from sin, and 'to redeem to himself a people zealous of good works,' and hath to this purpose revealed to us all his Father's will, and destroyed the works of the devil, and gives us his Holy Spirit, and by him we shall be justified in this obedience; therefore, when works signify a sincere, hearty endeavour to keep all God's commands, out of a belief in Christ, that if we endeavour to do so, we shall be helped by his grace, and if we really do so, we shall be pardoned for what is past, and if we continue to do so, we shall receive a crown of glory; therefore, it is no wonder that it is said we are to be justified by works; always meaning, not the works of the law, that is, works that are meritorious, works that can challenge the reward, works that need no mercy, no repentance, no humiliation, and no appeal to grace and favour; but always meaning works that are an obedience to God by the measures of good-will, and a sincere endeavour, and the faith of the Lord Jesus.

3. But thus also it is in the word 'justification:' for God is justified, and wisdom is justified, and man is justified, and a sinner is not justified as long as he continues in sin; and a sinner is justified when he repents, and when he is pardoned; and an innocent person is justified when he is declared

to be no criminal; and a righteous man is justified when he is saved; and a weak Christian is justified when his imperfect services are accepted for the present, and himself thrust forward to more grace: and he that is justified may be justified more; and every man that is justified to one purpose, is not so to all; and faith, in divers senses, gives justification in as many; and therefore, though to every sense of faith there is not always a degree of justification in any, yet when the faith is such that justification is the product and correspondent, as that faith may be imperfect, so the justification is but begun, and either must proceed further, or else, as the faith will die, so the justification will come to nothing. The like observation might be made concerning imputation, and all the words used in this question; but these may suffice till I pass to other particulars.

4. Not only the word 'faith,' but also 'charity,' and 'godliness,' and 'religion,' signify sometimes particular graces; and sometimes they suppose universally, and mean conjugations and unions of graces, as is evident to them that read the Scriptures with observation. Now when justification is attributed to faith, or salvation to godliness, they are to be understood in the aggregate sense; for, that I may give but one instance of this, when St. Paul speaks of faith as it is a particular grace, and separate from the rest, he also does separate it from all possibility of bringing us to heaven: 'Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.'¹ when faith

¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

includes charity, it will bring us to heaven ; when it is alone, when it is without charity, it will do nothing at all.

5. Neither can this phenomenon be solved by saying, that though faith alone does justify, yet when she does justify, she is not alone, but good works must follow ; for this is said to no purpose :

1. Because if we be justified by faith alone, the work is done, whether charity does follow or no ; and, therefore, that want of charity cannot hurt us.

2. There can be no imaginable cause why charity and obedience should be at all necessary, if the work can be done without it.

3. If obedience and charity be not a condition of our salvation, then it is not necessary to follow faith ; but if it be, it does as much as faith, for that is but a part of the condition.

4. If we can be saved without charity and keeping the commandments, what need we trouble ourselves for them ? If we cannot be saved without them, then either faith without them does not justify ; or if it does, we are never the better, for we may be damned for all that justification.

The consequent of these observations is briefly this :

That no man should fool himself by disputing about the philosophy of justification, and what causality faith hath in it, and whether it be the act of faith that justifies, or the habit ? Whether faith as a good work, or faith as an instrument ? Whether faith as it is obedience, or faith as it is an access to Christ ? Whether as a hand, or as a heart ? Whether by its own innate virtue, or by the efficacy of the object ? Whether as a sign, or as a

thing signified? Whether by introduction, or by perfection? Whether in the first beginnings, or in its last and best productions? Whether by inherent worthiness, or adventitious imputations? *Uberius ista quæso*, &c. (that I may use the words of Cicero¹): these things are knotty, and too intricate to do any good; they may amuse us, but never instruct us; and they have already made men careless and confident, disputative and troublesome, proud and uncharitable, but neither wiser nor better. Let us therefore leave these weak ways of troubling ourselves or others, and directly look to the theology of it, the direct duty, the end of faith, and the work of faith, the conditions and the instruments of our salvation, the just foundation of our hopes, how our faith can destroy our sin, and how it can unite us unto God; how by it we can be made partakers of Christ's death, and imitators of his life. For since it is evident, by the premises, that this article is not to be determined or relied on by arguing from words of many significations, we must walk by a clearer light, by such plain sayings and dogmatical propositions of Scripture, which evidently teach us our duty, and place our hopes on that which cannot deceive us, that is, which require obedience, which call on us to glorify God, and to do good to men, and to keep all God's commandments with diligence and sincerity.

For since the end of our faith is, that we may be disciples and servants of the Lord Jesus, advancing his kingdom here, and partaking of it hereafter; since we are commanded to believe what Christ

¹ Tuscul. i. 8. Davis.

taught, that it may appear as reasonable as it is necessary to do what he hath commanded; since faith and works are in order one to the other, it is impossible that evangelical faith and evangelical works should be opposed one to the other in the effecting of our salvation. So that as it is to no purpose for Christians to dispute whether we are justified by faith or the works of the law, that is, the covenant of works, without the help of faith and the auxiliaries and allowances of mercy on God's part, and repentance on ours; because no Christian can pretend to this; so it is perfectly foolish to dispute whether Christians are to be justified by faith, or the works of the gospel; for I shall make it appear that they are both the same thing. No man disparages faith but he that says faith does not work righteousness; for he that says so, says indeed it cannot justify; for he says that faith is alone: it is 'faith only,' and the words of my text are plain: 'You see,' saith St. James, that is, it is evident to your sense, it is as clear as an ocular demonstration, 'that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.'

My text hath in it these two propositions; a negative and an affirmative. The negative is this; 1. 'By faith only' a man is not justified. The affirmative; 2. 'By works also' a man is justified.

When I have briefly discoursed of these, I shall only add such practical considerations as shall make the doctrines useful, and tangible, and material.

1. By faith only a man is not justified. By *faith only*, here is meant, faith without obedience.

For what do we think of those that detain the faith in unrighteousness? They have faith, they could not else keep it in so ill a cabinet: but yet the apostle reckons them amongst the reprobates; for the abominable, the reprobates, and the disobedient, are all one; and, therefore, such persons, for all their faith, shall have no part with faithful Abraham: for none are his children but they that do the works of Abraham. Abraham's faith, without Abraham's works, is nothing; for of him 'that hath faith and hath not works,' St. James asks, 'can faith save him?'¹ meaning, that it is impossible. For what think we of those, that did miracles in Christ's name, and in his name cast out devils? Have not they faith? Yes; 'all faith,' that is, alone, for 'they could remove mountains;' but yet to many of them Christ will say, 'Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not.' Nay, at last, what think we of the devils themselves? Have not they faith? Yes; and this faith is not the faith of miracles neither; but it is an operative faith, it works a little; for it makes them tremble; and it may be, that is more than thy faith does to thee: and yet dost thou hope to be saved by a faith that does less to thee than the devil's faith does to him? That is impossible. For 'faith without works is dead,' saith St. James. It is *manus arida*, saith St. Austin; "it is a withered hand;" and that which is dead cannot work the life of grace in us, much less obtain eternal life for us. In short, a man may have faith, and yet do the works of unrighteousness; he may have faith,

¹ Chap. ii. 14.

and be a devil ; and then what can such a faith do to him or for him ? It can do him no good in the present constitution of affairs. St. Paul, from whose mistaken words much noise hath been made in this question, is clear in this particular : ‘ Nothing in Christ Jesus can avail, but faith working by charity :’¹ that is, as he expounds himself once again, ‘ nothing but a new creature, nothing but keeping the commandments of God.’ If faith be defined to be any thing that does not change our natures, and make us to be a new creation unto God ; if keeping the commandments be not in the definition of faith, it avails nothing at all. Therefore deceive not yourselves ; they are the words of our blessed Lord himself : ‘ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord,’ that is, not every one that confesses Christ, and believes in him, calling Christ Master and Lord, shall be saved ; ‘ but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven.’ These things are so plain, that they need no commentary ; so evident, that they cannot be denied : and to these I add but this one truth ; that faith alone without a good life is so far from justifying a sinner, that it is one of the greatest aggravations of his condemnation in the whole world. For no man can be so greatly damned as he that hath faith ; for unless he knows his Master’s will, that is, by faith be convinced, and assents to the revelations of the will of God, ‘ he can be beaten but with few stripes :’ but he that believes, hath no excuse ; he is *αὐτοκατάκριτος*, “ condemned by the sentence of his own heart,” and therefore ‘ many stripes,’ the greater condemna-

¹ Gal. v. 6.² Gal. vi. 15. 1 Cor. vii. 19.

tion, shall be his portion. Natural reason is a light to the conscience, but faith is a greater; and therefore, if it be not followed, it damns deeper than the hell of the infidels and uninstructed. And so I have done with the negative proposition of my text: a man is not justified by faith alone; that is, by faith which hath not in it charity and obedience.

2. If faith alone will not do it, what will? The affirmative part of the text answers; not faith alone; but works must be an ingredient: 'a man is justified by works;' and that is now to be explicated and proved. It will be absolutely to no purpose to say that faith alone does justify, if, when a man is justified, he is never the nearer to be saved. Now that without obedience no man can go to heaven, is so evident in holy Scripture, that he that denies it, hath no faith. 'There is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked;'¹ and 'I will not justify a sinner,'² saith God; unless faith purges away our sins, it can never justify. Let a man believe all the revelations of God; if that belief ends in itself, and goes no further, it is like physic taken to purge the stomach; if it do not work, it is so far from bringing health, that itself is a new sickness. Faith is a great purger and purifier of the soul—'purifying your hearts by faith,' saith the apostle. It is the best physic in the world for a sinful soul; but if it does not work, it corrupts in the stomach, it makes us to rely on weak propositions and trifling confidences, it is but a dreaming *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, "a fantastic dream," and introduces pride or superstition, swelling thoughts and presumptions of the divine

¹ Isaiah, lvii. 21.

² Exod. xxv. 7.

favour : but what saith the apostle ? ' Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man can see God : ' mark that. If faith does not make you charitable and holy, talk no more of justification by it, for you shall never see the glorious face of God. Faith indeed is a title and relation to Christ ; it is a naming of his names ; but what then ? Why then, saith the apostle, ' let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.'

For let any man consider, can the faith of Christ and the hatred of God stand together ? Can any man be justified, that does not love God ? Or can any man love God and sin at the same time ? And does not he love sin, that falls under its temptation, and obeys it in the lusts thereof, and delights in the vanity, and makes excuses for it, and returns to it with passion, and abides with pleasure ? This will not do it ; such a man cannot be justified for all his believing. But, therefore, the apostle shows us a more excellent way : ' This is a true saying, and I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works.'¹ The apostle puts great force on this doctrine, he arms it with a double preface ; the saying is ' true,' and it is to be ' constantly affirmed ;' that is, it is not only true, but necessary ; it is like Pharaoh's dream, doubled, because it is bound on us by the decree of God ; and it is unalterably certain that every believer must do good works, or his believing will signify little ; nay more than so, every man must be careful to do good works ;

¹ Heb. xii. 14.

² Titus, iii. 8.

and more yet, he must carefully maintain them; that is, not do them by fits and interrupted returns, but *ποιεῖσθαι*, to be incumbent on them, to dwell on them, to maintain good works; that is, to persevere in them. But I am yet but in the general; be pleased to go along with me in these particular considerations.

1. No man's sins are pardoned, but in the same measure in which they are mortified, destroyed, and taken away; so that if faith does not cure our sinful natures, it never can justify, it never can procure our pardon. And therefore it is, that as soon as ever faith in the Lord Jesus was preached, at the same time also they preached repentance from dead works: insomuch that St. Paul reckons it among the fundamentals and first principles of Christianity;¹ nay, the Baptist preached repentance and amendment of life as a preparation to the faith of Christ. And I pray consider; can there be any forgiveness of sins without repentance? But if an apostle should preach forgiveness to all that believe, and this belief did not also mean that they should repent and forsake their sin, the sermons of the apostle would make Christianity nothing else but the sanctuary of Romulus, a device to get together all the wicked people of the world, and to make them happy without any change of manners. Christ came to other purposes; he came 'to sanctify us and to cleanse us by his word:'² the word of faith was not for itself, but was a design of holiness, and the very 'grace of God did appear,' for this end; that 'teaching us to deny all ungodliness

¹ Heb. vi. 1

² 1 John, iii 8.

and worldly lusts, we should live holily, justly, and soberly in this present world :¹ he came to gather a people together; not like David's army, when Saul pursued him, but the armies of the Lord, 'a faithful people, a chosen generation :'² and what is that? The Spirit of God adds, 'a people zealous of good works.' Now as Christ proved his power to forgive sins by curing the poor man's palsy, because a man is never pardoned, but when the punishment is removed; so the great act of justification of a sinner, the pardoning of his sins, is then only effected, when the spiritual evil is taken away : that is the best indication of a real and an eternal pardon, when God takes away the hardness of the heart, the love of sin, the accursed habit, the evil inclination, the sin that doth so easily beset us; and when that is gone, what remains within us that God can hate? Nothing stays behind but God's creation, the work of his own hands, the issues of his Holy Spirit. The faith of a Christian is *πάσης ἀμαρτίας ἀναπερικῆ*, 'it destroys the whole body of sin;' and to suppose that Christ pardons a sinner, whom he doth not also purge and rescue from the dominion of sin, is to affirm that he justifies the wicked; that he calls good evil, and evil good; that he delights in a wicked person; that he makes a wicked man all one with himself; that he makes the members of a harlot at the same time also the members of Christ: but all this is impossible, and therefore ought not to be pretended to by any Christian. Severe are those words of our blessed Saviour, 'Every plant in me that

¹ Eph. v. 25. ² Tit. ii. 11.

beareth not fruit, he taketh away:"¹ faith ingrafts us into Christ; by faith we are inserted into the vine; but the plant that is ingrafted, must also be parturient and fruitful, or else it shall be quite cut off from the root, and thrown into the everlasting burning: and this is the full and plain meaning of those words so often used in Scripture for the magnification of faith, 'The just shall live by faith: no man shall live by faith but the just man; he indeed is justified by faith, but no man else; the unjust and the unrighteous man hath no portion in this matter. That is the first great consideration in this affair; no man is justified in the least sense of justification, that is, when it means nothing but the pardon of sins, but when his sin is mortified and destroyed.

2. No man is actually justified but he that is in some measure sanctified. For the understanding and clearing of which proposition, we must know, that justification, when it is attributed to any cause, does not always signify justification actual. Thus, when it is said in Scripture, 'We are justified by the death of Christ,' it is but the same thing to say, 'Christ died for us;' and he rose again for us too, that we might indeed be justified in due time, and by just measures and dispositions: 'he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification;' that is, by his death and resurrection, he hath obtained this power, and effected this mercy, that if we believe him and obey, we shall be justified and made capable of all the blessings of the kingdom. But that this is no more but a capacity of pardon, of

¹ John xv. 2.

grace, and of salvation, appears not only by God's requiring obedience as a condition on our parts, but by his expressly attributing this mercy to us at such times, and in such circumstances, in which it is certain and evident that we could not actually be justified; for so saith the Scripture: 'We, when we were enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us;'¹ that is, then was our justification wrought on God's part; that is, then he intended this mercy to us, then he resolved to show us favour, to give us promises, and laws and conditions, and hopes, and an infallible economy of salvation. And when faith lays hold on this grace, and this justification, then we are to do the other part of it; that is, as God made it potential by the death and resurrection of Christ, so we, laying hold on these things by faith, and working the righteousness of faith, that is, performing what is required on our parts, we, I say, make it actual; and for this very reason it is that the apostle puts more emphasis on the resurrection of Christ than on his death, 'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again.'² And 'Christ was both delivered for our sins, and is risen again for our justification;'³ implying to us, that as it is in the principal, so it is in the correspondent; our sins indeed are potentially pardoned, when they are marked out for death and crucifixion; when, by resolving and fighting against sin, we die to sin daily, and are so made conformable to his death; but we must partake of Christ's resurrection before this

¹ Rom. v. 8, 10.² Rom. viii. 28.³ Rom. iv. 25.

justification can be actual; when we are 'dead to sin, and are risen again unto righteousness,' then, as we are 'partakers of his death,' so we shall 'be partakers of his resurrection,' saith St. Paul; that is, then we are truly, effectually, and indeed justified; till then we are not.

'He that loveth gold shall not be justified,' saith the wise Bensirach;¹ he that is covetous, let his faith be what it will, shall not be accounted righteous before God, because he is not so in himself, and he is not so in Christ, for he is not in Christ at all; he hath no righteousness in himself, and he hath none in Christ; for if we be in Christ, or if 'Christ be in us, the body is dead by reason of sin, and the spirit is life because of righteousness.'² for this is the *τὸ πιστὸν*, 'that faithful thing,' that is, the faithfulness is manifested; the *emun*, from whence comes *emunah*, which is the Hebrew word for 'faith,' from whence 'amen' is derived. *Hoc fidum est*, 'this is faithfulness,' when God and we both say amen to our promises and undertakings. God is faithful, be thou so too; for if thou failest him, thy faith hath failed thee. *Fides sumitur pro eo, quod est inter utrumque placitum*,³ says one; and then it is true which the prophet and the apostle said, 'the just shall live by faith, in both senses: *ex fide mea vivet, ex fide sua*: "we live by God's faith, and by our own;" by his fidelity, and by ours. When the righteousness of God becomes 'your righteousness, and exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees;' when the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, 'by walking not after the flesh, but

¹ Eccus. xxxi.

² Rom. viii. 10.

³ Faith has reference to what is agreeable to both parties.

after the Spirit; then we are justified by God's truth and by ours, by his grace and our obedience. So that now we see that justification and sanctification cannot be distinguished but as words of art signifying the various steps of progression in the same course; they may be distinguished in notion and speculation, but never when they are to pass on to material events; for no man is justified but he that is also sanctified. They are the express words of St. Paul: 'Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son,' to be like to Christ; and then it follows, 'whom he hath predestinated,' so predestinated, 'them he hath also called; and whom he hath called, them he hath also justified:' and then it follows, 'whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified.'¹ So that no man is justified, that is, so as to signify salvation, but sanctification must be precedent to it; and that was my second consideration.

3. I pray consider, that he that does not believe the promises of the gospel, cannot pretend to faith in Christ; but the promises are all made to us on the conditions of obedience, and he that does not believe them as Christ made them, believes them not at all. 'In well-doing commit yourselves to God as unto a faithful Creator;' there is no committing ourselves to God without well-doing: 'For God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them that obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; but to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, to them eternal life.'² So that if faith apprehends any other promises, it is illusion, and not

¹ Rom. viii. 29.

² Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8.

faith; God gave us none such, Christ purchased none such for us; search the Bible over, and you shall find none such. But if faith lays hold on these promises that are, and as they are, then it becomes an article of our faith, that without obedience and a sincere endeavour to keep God's commandments, no man living can be justified: and, therefore, let us take heed, when we magnify the free grace of God, we do not exclude the conditions which this free grace hath set on us. Christ freely died for us, God pardons us freely in our first access to him; we could never deserve pardon, because when we need pardon we are enemies, and have no good thing in us; and he freely gives us of his Spirit, and freely he enables us to obey him; and for our little imperfect services he freely and bountifully will give us eternal life: here is free grace all the way, and he overvalues his pitiful services, who thinks that he deserves heaven by them: and that if he does his duty tolerably, eternal life is not a free gift to him, but a deserved reward.

It was the meditation of the wise chancellor of Paris: "I know that without a good life, and the fruits of repentance, a sinner cannot be justified: and, therefore, I must live well, or I must die for ever: but if I do live holily, I do not think that I deserve heaven: it is the cross of Christ that procures me grace; it is the Spirit of Christ that gives me grace; it is the mercy and the free gift of Christ that brings me unto glory."¹ But yet he that shall

¹ *Conscius est animus meus, experientia testis,
Mystica quæ retuli dogmata vera scio.
Non tamen idcirco scio me fore glorificandum;
Spes mea crux Christi, gratia, non opera.*

exclude the works of faith from the justification of a sinner by the blood of Christ, may as well exclude faith itself; for faith itself is one of the works of God; it is a good work, so said Christ to them that asked him, 'What shall we do to work the works of God?' Jesus said, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.'¹ Faith is not only the foundation of good works, but itself is a good work; it is not only the cause of obedience, but a part of it; it is not only, as the son of Sirach calls it, 'a beginning of cleaving unto God,' but it carries us on to the perfection of it. Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith; and when faith is finished, a good life is made perfect in our kind: let no man therefore expect events for which he hath no promise; nor call for God's fidelity without his own faithfulness; nor snatch at a promise without performing the condition; nor think faith to be a hand to apprehend Christ, and to do nothing else; for that will but deceive us, and turn religion into words, and holiness into hypocrisy, and the promises of God into a snare, and the truth of God into a lie. For when God made a covenant of faith, he made also the *νόμος πίστεως*, 'the law of faith;' and when he admitted us to a covenant of more mercy than was in the covenant of works, or of the law, he did not admit us to a covenant of idleness, and an incurious walking in a state of disobedience; but the mercy of God leadeth us to repentance, and when he gives us better promises, he intends we should pay him a better obedience: when he forgives us what is past, he intends we should sin no more;

¹ John, vi. 28, 29.

when he offers us his graces, he would have us to make use of them; when he causes us to distrust ourselves, his meaning is we should rely on him; when he enables us to do what he commands us, he commands us to do all that we can. And, therefore, this covenant of faith and mercy is also a covenant of holiness, and the grace that pardons us does also purify us: for so saith the apostle, 'He that hath this hope purifies himself, even as God is pure.' And when we are so, then we are justified indeed; this is the νόμος πίστεως, 'the law of faith;' and by works in this sense, that is, by the works of faith, by faith working by love, and producing fruits worthy of amendment of life, we are justified before God. And so I have done with the affirmative proposition of my text: you see that 'a man is justified by works.'

But there is more in it than this matter yet amounts to: for St. James does not say, 'we are justified by works, and are not justified by faith;' that had been irreconcilable with St. Paul: but we are so justified by works, that it is not by faith alone; it is faith and works together: that is, it is 'by the obedience of faith,' by the works of faith, by the law of faith, by righteousness evangelical, by the conditions of the gospel, and the measures of Christ. I have many things to say in this particular; but because I have but a little time left to say them in, I will sum it all up in this proposition; that in the question of justification and salvation, faith and good works are no part of a distinction, but members of one entire body. Faith and good works together work the righteousness of God: that is, that I may speak plainly, justifying faith contains in it obedience; and if this be made

good, then the two apostles are reconciled to each other, and both of them to the necessity, the indispensable necessity of a good life.

Now, that justifying and saving faith must be defined by something more than an act of understanding, appears not only in this, that St. Peter reckons faith as distinctly from knowledge as he does from patience, or strength, or brotherly kindness; saying, 'Add to your faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge;'¹ but in this also, because an error in life, and whatsoever is against holiness, is against faith: and, therefore, St. Paul reckons the lawless and the disobedient, murderers of parents, man-stealing, and such things, to be against sound doctrine; for the doctrine of faith is called *ἡ κατ' εὐσέβειαν διδασκαλία*, 'the doctrine that is according to godliness.' And when St. Paul prays against ungodly men, he adds this reason, 'for all men have not faith:'² meaning that wicked men are infidels and unbelievers; and particularly he affirms of him 'that does not provide for his own, that he hath denied the faith.'³ Now from hence it follows that faith is godliness, because all wickedness is infidelity; it is an apostacy from the faith. *Ille erit, ille nocens, qui me tibi fecerat hostem*; he that sins against God, he is the enemy to the faith of Jesus Christ; and therefore we deceive ourselves, if we place faith in the understanding only; it is not that, and it does not well there, but *ἐν καθαρῇ συνειδήσει*, saith the apostle; the mystery of faith is kept no where, it dwells no where, but 'in a pure conscience.'

For I consider, that, since all moral habits are

¹ 2 Per, i. 5.

² 2 Thess. iii. 2.

³ 1 Tim. v. 8.

best defined by their operation, we can best understand what faith is by seeing what it does. To this purpose hear St. Paul: 'By faith Abel offered up to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. By faith Noah made an ark. By faith Abraham left his country, and offered up his son. By faith Moses chose to suffer affliction, and accounted the reproach of Christ greater than all the riches of Egypt.'¹ In short, the children of God, 'by faith, subdued kingdoms, and wrought righteousness.' To work righteousness is as much the duty and work of faith as believing is. So that now we may quickly make an end of this great inquiry, whether a man is justified by faith, or by works, for he is so by both: if you take it alone, faith does not justify; but take it in the aggregate sense, as it is used in the question of justification by St. Paul, and then faith does not only justify, but it sanctifies too: and then you need to inquire no further; obedience is a part of the definition of faith, as much as it is of charity. 'This is love,' saith St. John, 'that we keep his commandments.' And the very same is affirmed of faith too by Ben-sirach, 'He that believeth the Lord will keep his commandments.'²

I have now done with all the propositions expressed and implied in the text. Give me leave to make some practical considerations; and so I shall dismiss you from this attention.

1. The rise I take from the words of St. Epiphanius, speaking in praise of the apostolical and purest ages of the church. There was, at first, no distinction of sects and opinions in the church:

¹ Heb. xi.

² Ecclus. xxxii. 24.

she knew no difference of men, but good and bad; there was no separation made, but what was made by piety or impiety, or, says he, which is all one, by fidelity and infidelity; "for faith hath in it the image of godliness engraven, and infidelity hath the character of wickedness and prevarication."¹ A man was not then esteemed a saint, for disobeying his bishop or an apostle, nor for misunderstanding the hard sayings of St. Paul about predestination: to kick against the laudable customs of the church was not then accounted a note of the godly party; and to despise government was but an ill mark and weak indication of being a good Christian. The kingdom of God did not then consist in words, but in power, the power of godliness; though now we are fallen into another method; we have turned all religion into faith, and our faith is nothing but the productions of interest or disputing: it is adhering to a party, and a wrangling against all the world beside; and when it is asked of what religion he is of, we understand the meaning to be, what faction does he follow: what are the articles of his sect, not what is the manner of his life: and if men be zealous for their party and that interest, then they are precious men, though otherwise they be covetous as the grave, factious as Dathan, schismatical as Corah, or proud as the fallen angels. Alas! these things will but deceive us; the faith of a Christian cannot consist in strifes about words, and perverse disputings of men. These things the apostle calls 'profane and vain babblings';² and,

¹ Πίστις μὲν ἐπέχουσα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ εἰκόνα· ἀπιστία δὲ ἐπέχουσα τὸν ἀσεβείας χαρακτῆρα καὶ παρανομίας.—*Par-nar. lib. i. edit. Basil. p. 8. l. 46.*

² 2 Tim. ii. 16.

mark what he says of them, these things will increase ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἀσεβείας. They are, in themselves ungodliness, and will produce more,—‘they will increase unto more ungodliness.’ But the faith of a Christian had other measures; that was faith then, which made men faithful to their vows in baptism. The faith of a Christian was the best security in contracts, and a Christian’s word was as good as his bond, because he was faithful that promised, and a Christian would rather die than break his word, and was always true to his trust; he was faithful to his friend, and loved as Jonathan did David. This was the Christian faith then: their religion was, to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; and so it ought to be. ‘True religion is to visit the fatherless and widow, and to keep ourselves unspotted of the world.’ That is a good religion, that is ‘pure and undefiled.’ So St. James: and St. Chrysostom defines true religion to be, ‘a pure faith and a godly life;’¹ for they make up the whole mystery of godliness; and no man could then pretend to faith, but he that did do valiantly, and suffer patiently, and resist the devil, and overcome the world. These things are as properly the actions of faith, as alms is of charity; and, therefore, they must enter into the moral definition of it. And this was truly understood by Salvian, that wise and godly priest of Massilia: What is faith, and what is believing? saith he: “That man does faithfully believe in Christ, who is faithful unto God,—who faithfully keeps God’s commandments;”² and, therefore, let

¹ Πίστιν καθαρὰν καὶ ὁρθὸν βίον.

² Hominem fideliter Christo credere est fidelem Deo esse, h. e. fideliter Dei mandata servare.

us measure our faith here, by our faithfulness to God, and by our diligence to do our Master's commandments; for, said Lactantius; "The whole religion of a Christian is to live unblameably,"¹ that is, in all holiness and purity of conversation.

2. When our faith is spoken of as the great instrument of justification and salvation, take Abraham's faith as your best pattern, and that will end the dispute; because that he was justified by faith, when his faith was mighty in effect; when he trusted in God, when he believed the promises, when he expected a resurrection of the dead, when he was strong in faith, when he gave glory to God, when, against hope, he believed in hope; and when all this passed into an act of a most glorious obedience, even denying his greatest desires, contradicting his most passionate affections, offering to God the best thing he had, and exposing to death his beloved Isaac, his laughters, all his joy, at the command of God. 'By this faith he was justified,' saith St. Paul; 'by these works he was justified,' saith St. James; that is, by this faith working this obedience. And then all the difficulty is over; only remember this, your faith is weak, and will do but little for you, if it be not stronger than all your secular desires and all your peevish angers. Thus we find, in the holy gospels, this conjunction declared necessary, 'Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.'² Here is as glorious an event promised to faith as can be expressed; faith shall obtain any thing of God. True; but it is not faith

¹ Christianorum omnis religio sine scelere et macula vivere.
—Instit. lib. v. c. 9.

² Mark, xi. 24.

alone, but faith in prayer; faith praying, but not faith simply believing. So St. James; the 'prayer of faith shall save the sick;' but adds, it must be 'the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man;' so that faith shall prevail, but there must be prayer in faith, and fervour in prayer, and devotion in fervour, and righteousness in devotion; and then impute the effect to faith if you please, provided that it be declared, that effect cannot be wrought by faith, unless it be so qualified. But Christ adds one thing more: 'When ye stand praying, forgive; but if ye will not forgive, neither will your Father forgive you.' So that it will be to no purpose to say a man is justified by faith, unless you mingle charity with it; for without the charity of forgiveness, there can be no pardon; and then justification is but a word, when it effects nothing.

3. Let every one take heed, that by an importune adhering to and relying on a mistaken faith, he do not really make a shipwreck of a right faith. Hymenæus and Alexander lost their faith by putting away a good conscience; and what matter is it of what religion or faith a man be of, if he be a villain and a cheat, a man of no truth, and of no trust, a lover of the world, and not a lover of God? But, I pray, consider, can any man have faith that denies God? That is not possible: and cannot a man as well deny God by an evil action, as by an heretical proposition? Cannot a man deny God by works, as much as by words? Hear what the apostle says: 'They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.'

¹ Tit. i. 16.

Disobedience is a denying God. *Nolumus hunc regnare*, is as plain a renouncing of Christ, as *Nolumus huic credere*. It is to no purpose to say, 'We believe in' Christ and have faith, unless Christ, 'reign in our hearts' by faith.

4. From these premises we may see but too evidently, that though a great part of mankind pretend to be saved by faith, yet they know not what it is, or else wilfully mistake it, and place their hopes on sand, or the more unstable water. Believing is the least thing in a justifying faith; for faith is a conjugation of many ingredients, and faith is a covenant, and faith is a law, and faith is obedience, and faith is a work, and indeed it is a sincere cleaving to, and closing with the terms of the gospel in every instance, in every particular. Alas! the niceties of a spruce understanding, and the curious nothings of useless speculation, and all the opinions of men that make the divisions of heart, and do nothing else, cannot bring us one drop of comfort in the day of tribulation, and therefore are no parts of the strength of faith. Nay, when a man begins truly to fear God, and is in the agonies of mortification, all these new nothings and curiosities will lie neglected by, as baubles do by children, when they are deadly sick. But that only is faith that makes us to love God, to do his will, to suffer his impositions, to trust his promises, to see through a cloud, to overcome the world, to resist the devil, to stand in the day of trial, and to be comforted in all our sorrows. This is that precious faith so mainly necessary to be insisted on, that by it we may be sons of the free woman, *liberi a vitiis ac ritibus*; that the true Isaac may be in us, which is Christ ac-

according to the Spirit, the wisdom and power of God, a divine vigour and life, whereby we are enabled, with joy and cheerfulness, to walk in the way of God. By this you may try your faith, if you please, and make an end of this question : Do you believe in the Lord Jesus, yea or no ? God forbid else ; but if your faith be good, it will abide the trial. There are but three things that make the integrity of Christian faith ; believing the words of God, confidence in his goodness, and keeping his commandments.

For the first, it is evident that every man pretends to it ; if he calls himself a Christian, he believes all that is in the canon of the Scriptures ; and if he did not, he were indeed no Christian. But now consider, what think we of this proposition ? ‘ All shall be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.’¹ Does not every man believe this ? Is it possible they can believe there is any such thing as unrighteousness in the world, or any such thing as damnation, and yet commit that which the Scriptures call unrighteousness, and which all laws and all good men says is so ? Consider how many unrighteous men there are in the world, and yet how few of them think they shall be damned. I know not how it comes to pass, but men go on strange principles, and they have made Christianity to be a very odd institution, if it had not better measures than they are pleased to afford it. There are two great roots of all evil, covetousness and pride, and they have infected the greatest parts of mankind, and yet no man thinks himself to be either covetous or proud ;

¹ 1 Thess. ii. 12.

and, therefore, whatever you discourse against these sins, it never hits any man, but, like Jonathan's arrows to David, they fall short, or they fly beyond. Salvian complained of it in his time: "This we add unto our crimes; we are the vilest persons in the world, and yet we think ourselves to be good people,"¹ and, when we die, make no question but we shall go to heaven. There is no cause of this, but because we have not so much faith as believing comes to; and yet most men will pretend not only to believe, but to love Christ all this while. And how do they prove this? Truly they hate the memory of Judas, and curse the Jews that crucified Christ, and think Pilate a very miserable man, and that all the Turks are damned, and to be called Caiaphas is a word of reproach; and, indeed, there are many that do not much more for Christ than this comes to; things to as little purpose, and of as little signification. But so the Jews did hate the memory of Corah as we do of Caiaphas, and they built the sepulchre of the prophets; and we also are angry at them that killed the apostles and the martyrs; but, in the mean time, we neither love Christ nor his saints; for we neither obey him nor imitate them. And yet we should think ourselves highly injured, if one should call us infidels, and haters of Christ. But, I pray, consider; what is hating of any man, but designing and doing him all the injury and spite we can? Does not he hate Christ that dishonours him, that makes Christ's members the members of a harlot, that doth not feed and clothe these members? If the Jews did

¹ Hoc ad crimina nostra addimus, ut cum in omnibus rei simus etiam bonos nos et sanctos esse credamus.—Lib. iii.

hate Christ when they crucified him, then so does a Christian too, when he crucifies him again. Let us not deceive ourselves; a Christian may be damned as well as a Turk; and Christians may with as much malice crucify Christ as the Jews did: and so does every man that sins wilfully; he spills the blood of Christ, making it to be spent in vain. 'He that hateth you, hateth me; he that receives you, receives me,' said Christ to his apostles. I wish the world had so much faith as to believe that; and by this try whether we love Christ, and believe in him, or no. I shall, for the trial of our faith, ask one easy question: Do we believe that the story of David and Jonathan is true? Have we so much faith as to think it possible that two rivals of a crown should love so dearly? Can any man believe this, and not be infinitely ashamed to see Christians, almost all Christians, to be irreconcilably angry, and ready to pull their brother's heart out, when he offers to take our land or money from us? Why do almost all men that go to law for right, hate one another's persons? Why cannot men with patience hear their titles questioned? But, if Christianity be so excellent a religion, why are so very many Christians so very wicked? Certainly they do not so much as believe the propositions and principles of their own religion: for the body of Christians is so universally wicked, that it would be a greater change to see Christians generally live according to their profession, than it was at first from infidelity to see them to turn believers. The conversion from Christian to Christian, from Christian in title to Christian in sincerity, would be a greater miracle than it was when they were converted from heathen and Jew to Christian.

What is the matter? Is not 'repentance from dead works' reckoned by St. Paul¹ as one of the fundamental points of Christian religion? Is it not a piece of our catechism, the first thing we are taught, and is it not the last thing that we practise? We had better be without baptism than without repentance, and yet both are necessary; and, therefore, if we were not without faith, we should be without neither. Is not repentance a forsaking all sin, and an entire returning unto God? Who can deny this? And is it not plainly said in Scripture, 'Unless ye repent, ye shall all perish?' But show me the man that believes these things heartily; that is, show me a true penitent; he only believes the doctrines of repentance.

If I had time I should examine your faith by your confidence in God, and by your obedience. But if we fall in the mere believing, it is not likely we should do better in the other. But because all the promises of God are conditional, and there can be no confidence in the particular without a promise or revelation, it is not possible that any man that does not live well, should reasonably put his trust in God. To live a wicked life, and then to be confident that in the day of our death God will give us pardon, is not faith, but a direct want of faith. If we did believe the promises on their proper conditions, or believe that God's commandments were righteous and true, or that the threatenings were as really intended, as they are terribly spoken,—we should not dare to live at the rate we do. But 'wicked men have not faith,' saith St. Paul; and then the wonder ceases.

But there are such palpable contradictions between men's practices and the fundamentals of our faith, that it was a material consideration of our blessed Saviour, 'When the Son of Man comes, shall he find faith on earth?' meaning it should be very hard and scant: 'Every man shall boast of his own goodness; 'but a faithful man,' saith Solomon, who can find?' Some men are very good when they are afflicted.

When the gown of the day is the mantle of the night, and cannot, at the same time, cover the head and make the feet warm; when they have but one broken dish and no spoon, then they are humble and modest;¹ then they can suffer an injury and bear contempt: but give them riches, and they grow insolent; fear and pusillanimity did their first work, and an opportunity to sin undoes it all. *Bonum militem perdidisti, imperatorem pessimum creasti*, said Galba: "You have spoiled a good trooper, when you made me a bad commander." Others can never serve God but when they are prosperous; if they lose their fortune, they lose their faith, and quit their charity: *Non rata fides, ubi jam melior fortuna ruit*; if they become poor, they become liars and deceivers of their trust, envious and greedy, restless and uncharitable; that is, one way or other they show that they love the world, and by all the faith they pretend to, cannot overcome it.

Cast up, therefore, your reckonings impartially; see what is, what will be required at your hands: do not think you can be justified by faith, unless your faith be greater than all your passions: you

¹ Martial, xi. 57.

have not the learning, not so much as the common notices of faith, unless you can tell when you are covetous, and reprove yourself when you are proud ; but he that is so, and knows it not (and that is the case of most men) hath no faith, and neither knows God nor knows himself.

To conclude. He that hath true justifying faith, belives the power of God to be above the powers of nature ; the goodness of God above the merit and disposition of our persons ; the bounty of God above the excellency of our works ; the truth of God above the contradiction of our weak arguings and fears ; the love of God above our cold experience and ineffectual reason ; and the necessities of doing good works above the faint excuses and ignorant pretences of disputing sinners ; but want of faith makes us so generally wicked as we are, so often running to despair, so often baffled in our resolutions of a good life ; but he whose faith makes him more than conqueror over these difficulties, to him Isaac shall be born even in his old age ; the life of God shall be perfectly wrought in him ; and by this faith, so operative, so strong, so lasting, so obedient, he shall be justified, and he shall be saved.

SERMON VIII.

THE FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS;
OR, THE RIGHTEOUS CAUSE OPPRESSED.

I PETER, IV. 17, 18.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God : and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God.

And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?

PART I.

So long as the world lived by sense, and discourses of natural reason, as they were abated with human infirmities, and not at all heightened by the Spirit and divine revelations, so long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate ; and amongst the basest and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was profitable ; and he only wise that was rich ; and those men beloved of God who received from him all that might satisfy their lust, their ambition, or their revenge.

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and

exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to virtue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile virtue and misery, than to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their reason with a little beam of faith, or else heightened their reason by wiser principles than those of vulgar understandings, and taught them in the clear glass of faith, or the dim perspective of philosophy, to look beyond the cloud, and there to spy that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of heaven and the waters of affliction. And according as the world grew more enlightened by faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and sorrows. God sometimes sent a light of fire, and a pillar of a cloud, and the brightness of an angel, and the lustre of a star, and the sacrament of a rainbow, to guide his people through their portion of sorrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: but as the Sun of Righteousness approached towards the chambers of the east, and sent the harbingers of light peeping through the curtains of the night, and leading on the day of faith and brightest revelation; so God sent degrees of trouble on wise and good men, that now, in the same degree in the which the world lives by faith and not by sense, in the same degree they might be able to live in virtue even while she lived in trouble, and not reject so great a beauty, because she goes in mourning, and hath a black cloud of cyprus drawn before her face. Literally thus: God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant world by temporal prosperity; but by de-

grees changed his method ; and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God, and the expectations of heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their enemies, and were to endure the contradiction of sinners, and the immission of the sharpnesses of providence and divine economy.

First, Adam was placed in a garden of health and pleasure, from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of natural sorrows, which he and all his posterity till the flood ran through ; but in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them : they needed not fight for empires, or places for their cattle to graze in ; they lived long, and felt no want, no slavery, no tyranny, no war ; and the evils that happened were single, personal, and natural ; and no violences were then done, but they were like those things which the law calls "rare contingencies ;" for which as the law can now take no care and make no provisions, so then there was no law, but men lived free, and rich, and long, and they exercised no virtues but natural, and knew no felicity but natural : and so long their prosperity was just as was their virtue, because it was a natural instrument towards all that which they knew of happiness. But this public easiness and quiet, the world turned into sin ; and unless God did compel men to do themselves good, they would undo themselves : and then God broke in on them with a flood, and destroyed that generation, that he might begin the government of the world on a new stock, and bind virtue on men's spirits by new bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new laws, and gave to princes the power of the sword, and men might be punished to death in certain cases, and man's life was shortened, and slavery was brought into the world and the state of servants : and then war began, and evils multiplied on the face of the earth ; in which it is naturally certain, that they that are most violent and injurious prevailed on the weaker and more innocent ; and every tyranny that began from Nimrod to this day, and every usurper, was a peculiar argument to show that God began to teach the world virtue by suffering ; and that therefore he suffered tyrannies and usurpations to be in the world, and to be prosperous, and the rights of men to be snatched away from the owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive virtues of the soul. For so God brings good out of evil, turning tyranny into the benefits of government, and violence into virtue, and sufferings into rewards. And this was the second change of the world : personal miseries were brought in on Adam and his posterity, as a punishment of sin, in the first period ; and in the second, public evils were brought in by tyrants and usurpers, and God suffered them as the first elements of virtue, men being just newly put to school to infant sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christ's line was not yet drawn forth ; it began not to appear in what family the King of sufferings should descend, till Abraham's time ; and therefore till then there were no greater sufferings than what I have now reckoned. But when Abraham's family was chosen from among the many nations, and began to belong to God by a special right,

and he was designed to be the father of the Messiah; then God found out a new way to try him, even with a sound affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved Isaac: but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham, was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, and therefore was also but a type of sufferings. And excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature and accident, we see no change made for a long time after; but God having established a law in Abraham's family, did build it on promises of health, and peace, and victory, and plenty, and riches; and so long as they did not prevaricate the law of their God, so long they were prosperous: but God kept a remnant of Canaanites in the land, like a rod held over them, to vex or to chastise them into obedience, in which while they persevered nothing could hurt them; and that saying of David needs no other sense but the letter of its own expression: 'I have been young, and now am old; and yet I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.' The godly generally were prosperous, and a good cause seldom had an ill end, and a good man never died an ill death, till the law had spent a great part of its time, and it descended towards its declension and period. But, that the great Prince of sufferings might not appear on his stage of tragedies without some forerunners of sorrow, God was pleased to choose out some good men, and honour them, by making them to become little images of suffering. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah were martyrs of the law; but these were single deaths: Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego were thrown into a burning furnace, and Daniel into a den of

lions, and Susanna was accused for adultery; but these were but little arrests of the prosperity of the godly. As the time drew nearer that Christ should be manifest, so the sufferings grew bigger and more numerous: and Antiochus raised up a sharp persecution in the time of the Maccabees, in which many passed through the red sea of blood into the bosom of Abraham; and then Christ came. And that was the third period in which the changed method of God's providence was perfected; for Christ was to do his great work by sufferings, and by sufferings was to enter into blessedness; and by his passion he was made Prince of the catholic church, and as our head was, so must the members be. God made the same covenant with us that he did with his most holy Son, and Christ obtained no better conditions for us than for himself; that was not to be looked for; 'the servant must not be above his master: it is well if he be as his master; if the world persecuted him, they will also persecute us;' and 'from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force;' not 'the violent doers,' but 'the sufferers of violence.' For though the old law was established in the promises of temporal prosperity, yet the gospel is founded in temporal adversity; it is directly a covenant of sufferings and sorrows; for now 'the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.' That is the sense and design of the text; and I intend it as a direct antimony to the common persuasions of tyrannous, carnal, and vicious men, who reckon nothing good but what is prosperous: for though that proposition had many degrees of truth in the beginning of the law, yet the case is

now altered, God hath established its contradictory; and now every good man must look for persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by the sufferings and patience of holy persons; and, as men do well, and suffer evil, so they are dear to God; and whom he loves most, he afflicts most, and does this with a design of the greatest mercy in the world.

1. Then, the state of the gospel is a state of sufferings, not of temporal prosperities. This was foretold by the prophets: 'A fountain shall go out of the house of the Lord, *et irrigabit torrentem spinarum*, (so it is in the Vulgar Latin,) and it shall water the torrent of thorns,'¹ that is, the state or time of the gospel, which, like a torrent, shall carry all the world before it, and, like a torrent, shall be fullest in ill weather; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briers, sharp afflictions, temporal infelicities, and persecution. This sense of the words is more fully explained in the book of the prophet Isaiah: 'On the ground of my people shall thorns and briers come up; how much more in all the houses of the city of rejoicing!'² Which prophecy is the same in the style of the prophets, that my text is in the style of the apostles. The house of God shall be watered with the dew of heaven, and there shall spring up briers in it: 'Judgment must begin there; but how much more in the houses of the city of rejoicing!' how much more amongst 'them that are at ease in Sion,' that serve their desires, that satisfy their appetites, that are given over to their own hearts' lust, that so serve themselves, that they never serve God, that 'dwell in

¹ Joel, iii. 18.

² Isaiah, xxxii. 13.

the city of rejoicing!' They are like Dives, whose portion was in this life, 'who went in fine linen, and fared deliciously every day:' they, indeed, tremble on their briers and thorns, and suffer them not to grow in their houses; but the roots are in the ground, and they are reserved for fuel of wrath in the day of everlasting burning. Thus, you see, it was prophesied, now see how it was performed; Christ was the captain of our sufferings, and he began.

He entered into the world with all the circumstances of poverty. He had a star to illustrate his birth; but a stable for his bedchamber, and a manger for his cradle. The angels sang hymns when he was born; but he was cold and cried, uneasy and unprovided. He lived long in the trade of a carpenter; he, by whom God made the world, had, in his first years, the business of a mean and ignoble trade. He did good wherever he went; and almost wherever he went, was abused. He deserved heaven for his obedience, but found a cross in his way thither: and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in the lap of ease, softness, and a prosperous fortune, he it was only that could deserve that, or any thing that can be good. But, after he had chosen to live a life of virtue, of poverty, and labour, he entered into a state of death, whose shame and trouble were great enough to pay for the sins of the whole world. And I shall choose to express this mystery in the words of Scripture. He died not by a single or a sudden death, but he was the 'Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:' for he was massacred in Abel, saith St. Paulinus; he was tossed on the waves of the sea

in the person of Noah ; it was he that went out of his country, when Abraham was called from Charan and wandered from his native soil ; he was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Samson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Isaiah, cast into the dungeon with Jeremiah : for all these were types of Christ suffering. And then his passion continued even after his resurrection. For it is he that suffers in all his members ; it is he that ‘ endures the contradiction of all sinners ;’ it is he that is ‘ the Lord of life, and is crucified again, and put to open shame’ in all the sufferings of his servants, and sins of rebels, and defiances of apostates and renegados, and violence of tyrants, and injustice of usurpers, and the persecutions of his church. It is he that is stoned in St. Stephen, flayed in the person of St. Bartholomew : he was roasted on St. Laurence’s gridiron, exposed to lions in St. Ignatius, burnt in St. Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood forty martyrs of Cappadocia. *Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis sue sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum*, said St. Hilary ; “ The sacrament of Christ’s death is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity.”

All that Christ came for, was, or was mingled with, sufferings : for all those little joys which God sent, either to recreate his person, or to illustrate his office, were abated or attended with afflictions ; God being more careful to establish in him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh his sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life ; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mo-

thers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on him in the waters of baptism, but he was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also he entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story what he was to suffer at Jerusalem. And on Palm Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a king and a God, he wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven, that descended on Mount Hermon; weeping, in the midst of this triumph, over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace; he was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in his best days he was but half triumph, and half sorrow: he was sent to tell of his Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company or in the retinue of a shower, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person: that which concerns this question most, is, that he made for us a covenant of sufferings: his doctrines were such as expressly and by consequent enjoin and suppose sufferings and a state of affliction; his very promises were sufferings; his beatitudes were sufferings; his rewards, and his arguments to invite men to follow him, were only taken from sufferings in this life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter.

For if we sum up the commandments of Christ, we shall find humility,—mortification,—self-denial,—repentance,—renouncing the world,—mourning,—taking up the cross,—dying for him,—patience and poverty,—to stand in the chiefest rank of Christian precepts, and in the direct order to heaven: ‘He that will be my disciple, must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.’ We must follow him that was crowned with thorns and sorrows, him that was drenched in Cedron, nailed on the cross, that deserved all good, and suffered all evil: that is the sum of Christian religion, as it distinguishes from all religions in the world. To which we may add the express precept recorded by St. James: ‘Be afflicted, and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping.’¹ You see the commandments: will you also see the promises? These they are:—‘In the world ye shall have tribulation; in me ye shall have peace—Through many tribulations ye shall enter into heaven:—He that loseth father and mother, wives and children, houses and lands, for my name’s sake and the gospel, shall receive a hundred fold in this life, with persecution;’ that is part of his reward: and, ‘He chastiseth every son that he receiveth;—if ye be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards, and not sons.’ These are some of Christ’s promises: will you see some of Christ’s blessings that he gives his church? ‘Blessed are the poor: blessed are the hungry and thirsty: blessed are they that mourn: blessed are the humble: blessed are the persecuted.’² Of the eight beatitudes, five

¹ James, iv. 9.² Matt. v.

of them have temporal misery and meanness, or an afflicted condition, for their subject. Will you at last see some of the rewards which Christ hath propounded to his servants, to invite them to follow him? 'When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me:' when Christ is 'lifted up, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' that is, lifted on the cross, then, 'he will draw us after him.'—'To you it is given for Christ,' saith St. Paul, when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Philippians: 'well, what is given to them? some great favours surely;—true: 'It is not only given that you believe in Christ,'—though that be a great matter,—'but also that you suffer for him,' that is the highest of your honour. And therefore St. James: 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations:'² and St. Peter, 'Communicating with the sufferings of Christ, rejoice.'³ And St. James again: 'We count them blessed that have suffered:'⁴ and St. Paul, when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians, useth this form of prayer: 'Our Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God, and in the patience and sufferings of Christ.'⁵ So that if we will serve the King of sufferings, whose crown was of thorns, whose sceptre was a reed of scorn, whose imperial robe was a scarlet of mockery, whose throne was the cross; we must serve him in sufferings, in poverty of spirit, in humility and mortification; and for our reward we shall have persecution, and all its blessed consequents. *Atque hoc est esse Christianum*

Since this was done in the green tree, what

¹ Phil. i. 29.

² James, i. 2.

³ 1 Pet. iv. 13.

⁴ James v. 11.

⁵ 2 Thes. iii. 5; Heb. ii. 10.

might we expect should be done in the dry? Let us, in the next place, consider how God hath treated his saints and servants in the descending ages of the gospel: that if the best of God's servants were followers of Jesus in this covenant of sufferings, we may not 'think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if some new thing had happened to us.'¹ For as the gospel was founded in sufferings, we shall also see it grow in persecutions: and as Christ's blood did cement the corner-stones, and the first foundations, so the blood and sweat, the groans and sighings, the afflictions and mortifications of saints and martyrs, did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the building.

If we begin with the apostles, who were to persuade the world to become Christian, and to use proper arguments of invitations, we shall find that they never offered an argument of temporal prosperity; they never promised empires and thrones on earth, nor riches, nor temporal power: and it would have been soon confuted, if they who were whipped and imprisoned, banished and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised sunshine days to others, which they could not to themselves. Of all the apostles there was not one that died a natural death but only St. John;² and did he escape? Yes: but he was put into a cauldron of scalding lead and oil before the Porta Latina in Rome, and escaped death by miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him escape the torture: and, besides this, he lived long in banishment, and that was worse than St. Peter's chains. *Sanctus Petrus in vinculis, et Johannes ante Portam*

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 12.

² Tertul. S. Hieron.

Latinam, were both days of martyrdom, and church-festivals. And after a long and laborious life, and the affliction of being detained from his crown, and his sorrows for the death of his fellow-disciples, he died full of days and sufferings. And when St. Paul was taken into the apostolate, his commissions were signed in these words: 'I will show unto him how great things he must suffer for my name:'¹ and his whole life was a continual suffering. *Quotidie morior* was his motto, 'I die daily;' and his lesson that he daily learned was, to 'know Christ Jesus, and him crucified;' and all his joy was 'to rejoice in the cross of Christ;' and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his sufferings, and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished his own sufferings for expiation of the world; yet there are *ὑπερήματα θλίψεων*, 'portions that are behind of the sufferings' of Christ, which must be filled up by his body, the church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol; for 'in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the same shall ye be also of the consolation.' And therefore, concerning St. Paul, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing, or but very little, in Scripture, relating to his person and chances of his private life, but his labours and persecutions; as if the Holy Ghost did think nothing fit to stand on record for Christ but sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the divine providence: here was the case of Christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosper-

¹ Acts, ix. 16.

ous, learned and full of wise men; the gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit: God was on one side, and the devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their city; Babylon on earth, Jerusalem from above. The devil's city was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories, and cruelty; good news, and great wealth; conquest over kings, and making nations tributary: they 'bound kings in chains, and the nobles with links of iron;' and the inheritance of the earth was theirs: the Romans were lords over the greatest part of the world; and God permitted to the devil the firmament and increase, the wars and the success of that people giving to him an entire power of disposing the great change of the world, so as might best increase their greatness and power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman greatness was a professed enemy to Christianity. And on the other side, God was to build up Jerusalem, and the kingdom of the gospel; and he chose to build it of hewn stone, cut and broken: the apostles he chose for preachers, and they had no learning; women and mean people were the first disciples, and they had no power; the devil was to lose his kindom, he wanted no malice; and therefore he stirred up, and, as well as he could, he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the obstinacy of the Jews, against this doctrine and institution, which preached, and promised, and brought persecution along with it. On the one side, there was 'the offence of the cross;' on the other, 'the patience of the saints:' and what was

the event? They that had overcome the world, could not strangle Christianity. But so have I seen the sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darkness, and, without violence and noise, climbing up the hill, hath made night so retire, that its memory was lost in the joys and sprightfulness of the morning: and Christianity, without violence or armies, without resistance and self-preservation, without strength or human eloquence, without challenging of privileges or fighting against tyranny, without alteration of government and scandal of princes, with its humility and meekness, with toleration and patience, with obedience and charity, with praying and dying, did insensibly turn the world into Christian, and persecution into victory.

For Christ, who began, and lived, and died in sorrows, perceiving his own sufferings to succeed so well, and that, 'for suffering death, he was crowned with immortality,' resolved to take all his disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of his glory; knowing, God hath opened no gate of heaven but 'the narrow gate,' to which the cross was the key. And since Christ now being our high-priest in heaven, intercedes for us by representing his passion and the dolours of the cross, that even in glory he might still preserve the mercies of his past sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in him; he also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with 'the marks of the Lord Jesus:' 'He hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son.' And if, under a head crowned with thorns, we bring to God mem-

bers circled with roses, and softness, and delicacy—triumphant members in the militant church—God will reject us, he will not know us who are so unlike our elder brother: for we are members of the Lamb, not of the lion; and of Christ's suffering part, not of the triumphant part: and for three hundred years together the church lived on blood, and was nourished with blood; the blood of her own children. Thirty-three bishops of Rome in immediate succession were put to violent and unnatural deaths; and so were all the churches of the east and west built: the cause of Christ and of religion was advanced by the sword, but it was the sword of the persecutors, not of resisters or warriors: they were 'all baptized into the death of Christ;' their very profession and institution is to live like him, and when he requires it, to die for him; that is the very formality, the life and essence of Christianity. This, I say, lasted for three hundred years, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of Christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutors, and prevailed, till the country and the cities, and the court itself, was filled with Christians. And by this time the army of martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of sufferers blunted the hangman's sword. For Christ had triumphed over the princes and powers of the world, before he would admit them to serve him: he first felt their malice, before he would make use of their defence; to show, that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted kings and queens to be nurses of the church.

And now the church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the martyrs so long, began

now to suck the milk of queens. Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who meant by suffering to perfect his church, as himself was by the same instrument,—was pleased, now that persecution did cease, to inspire the church with the spirit of mortification and austerity ; and then they made colleges of sufferers,—persons who, to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being ; and by instruments of humility, by patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of the cross, the burden of the Lord,—by self-denial, by fastings and sackcloth, and pernoctations in prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering.

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the Prince of the catholic church, who was ‘a man of sufferings,’ and to whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have ‘put on the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left ;’ that is, in the sufferings of persecution, or the labours of mortification ; in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own ; by toleration or self-denial ; by actual martyrdom, or by aptness or disposition towards it ; by dying for Christ, or suffering for him ; by being willing to part with all when he calls for it, and by parting with what we can for the relief of his poor members. For, know this, there is no state in the church so serene, no days so prosperous,

in which God does not give to his servants the powers and opportunities of suffering for him; not only they that die for Christ, but they that live according to his laws, shall find some lives to part with, and many ways to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucify the old man and all his lusts, to mortify a beloved sin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastely, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in religion, and to choose our side for truth's sake, (not because it is prosperous, but because it pleases God,) to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and openness, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the importunity and troublesome kindness of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame, to refuse worldly pleasures when they tempt your soul beyond duty or safety, to take pains in the cause of religion, the 'labour of love,' and the crossing of your anger, peevishness, and morosity: these are the daily sufferings of a Christian; and if we perform them well, will have the same reward, and an equal smart, and greater labour, than the plain suffering the hangman's sword. This I have discoursed, to represent unto you that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christ's sufferings; that God will shut no age nor no man from his portion of the cross; that we cannot fail of the result of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the covenant of sufferings. 'Judgment must begin at God's house,' and enters first on the sons and heirs of the kingdom; and if it be not by

the direct persecution of tyrants, it will be by the direct persecution of the devil, or infirmities of our own flesh. But because this was but the secondary meaning of the text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

Let no Christian man make any judgment concerning his condition or his cause, by the external event of things. For although, in the law of Moses, God made with his people a covenant of temporal prosperity, and 'his saints did bind the kings of the Amorites, and the Philistines, in chains and their nobles with links of iron, and then that was the honour which all his saints had;' yet, in Christ Jesus he made a covenant of sufferings. Most of the graces of Christianity are suffering graces, and God hath predestinated us to sufferings, and we are baptized into suffering, and our very communions are symbols of our duty, by being the sacrament of Christ's death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promised only that he would be with us in tribulation, that he would give us his Spirit to assist us at tribunals, and his grace to despise the world, and to contemn riches, and boldness to confess every article of the Christian faith, in the face of armies and armed tyrants. And he also promised that 'all things should work together for the best to his servants;' that is, he would 'out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong issue sweetness;' and crowns and sceptres should spring from crosses, and that the cross itself should stand on the globes and sceptres of princes; but he never promised to his servants that they should pursue kings and destroy armies; that they should reign over nations, and

promote the cause of Jesus Christ by breaking his commandment. 'The shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, the armour of righteousness, and the weapons of spiritual warfare;' these are they by which Christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possess the chairs of doctors, and the thrones of princes, and the hearts of all men. But men, in all ages, will be tampering with shadows and toys. The apostles at no hand could endure to hear that Christ's 'kingdom was not of this world,' and that their Master should die a sad and shameful death; though that way he was to receive his crown, and 'enter into glory.' And, after Christ's time, when his disciples had taken up the cross, and were marching the King's highway of sorrows, there were a very great many, even the generality of Christians, for two or three ages together, who fell a dreaming that Christ should come and reign on earth again for a thousand years, and then the saints should reign in abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it till after the resurrection; in the meantime took up their cross, and followed after their Lord, the King of sufferings. But now-a-days, we find a generation of men who have changed the covenant of sufferings into victories and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their Christianity by their good fortunes; as if Christ had promised to his servants no heaven hereafter, no Spirit in the meantime to refresh their sorrows; as if he had enjoined them no passive graces; but as if to be a Christian and to be a Turk were the same thing. Mahomet entered and possessed by

the sword; Christ came by the cross, entered by humility, and his saints 'possess their souls in patience.'

God was fain to multiply miracles to make Christ capable of being 'a man of sorrows;' and shall we think he will work miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together, they are not worthy to be compared; and shall we, with Dives, choose our portion of 'good things in this life?' If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive his glory? It is in vain to think we shall obtain glories at an easier rate than to drink of the brook in the way in which Christ was drenched. When the devil appeared to St. Martin in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ; he answered, *Christus non nisi in cruce apparet suis, in hac vita*: "Christ appears not to his people, in this life, except in his cross." And when St. Ignatius was newly tied in a chain to be led to his martyrdom, he cried out, *Nunc incipio esse Christianus*: "Now I begin to be a Christian." And it was observed by Minutius Felix, and was indeed a great and excellent truth, *Omnes viri fortes, quos Gentiles prædicabant in exemplum, ærumnis suis inclyti floruerunt*: "The Gentiles in their whole religion never propounded any man imitable, unless the man were poor or persecuted." Brutus stood for his country's liberty, but lost his army and his life: Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth: Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall on the op-

pressed and the injured : he died together with his party :

*Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*¹

And if God thus dealt with the best of heathens, to whom he had made no clear revelation of immortal recompences ; how little is the faith, and how much less is the patience of Christians, if they shall think much to suffer sorrow, since they so clearly see, with the eye of faith, the great things which are laid up for them that are ‘ faithful unto the death ?’ Faith is useless, if now, in the midst of so great pretended lights, we shall not dare to trust God, unless we have all in hand that we desire, and suffer nothing for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of faith ; yet our Lord Jesus,—concerning whose passions the gospel speaks much, but little of his glorifications ; whose shame was public, whose pains were notorious, but his joys and transfigurations were secret, and kept private ; he who would not suffer his holy mother, whom in great degrees he exempted from sin, to be exempted from many and great sorrows ;—certainly intends to admit none to his resurrection but by the doors of his grave, none to glory but by the way of the cross. ‘ If we be planted into the likeness of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection ;’ else on no terms. Christ took away sin from us, but he left us our share of sufferings ; and the cross, which was first printed on us in the waters of baptism, must for ever be

¹ *Lucan, l. 128.*

borne by us in penance, in mortification, in self-denial, and in martyrdom, and toleration, according as God shall require of us, by the changes of the world, and the condition of the church.

For Christ considers nothing but souls, he values not their estate or bodies, supplying our want by his providence; and we are secured that our bodies may be killed, but cannot perish, so long as we preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ, our captain, hangs naked on the cross: our fellow-soldiers are cast into prison, torn with lions, rent in sunder with trees returning from their violent bendings, broken on wheels, roasted on gridirons, and have had the honour not only to have a good cause, but also to suffer for it; and by faith, not by armies, by patience, not by fighting, have overcome the world. *Et sit anima mea cum Christianis*: "I pray God my soul may be among the Christians." And yet the Turks have prevailed on a great part of the Christian world, and have made them slaves and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous: but when Christians are so, then they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds or poverty, change or scorn, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great success to support their persons and their pretences; for nothing but innocence and Christianity can flourish in persecution. I sum up this first discourse in a word: in all the Scripture, and in all the authentic stories of the church, we find it

often that the devil appeared in the shape of an 'angel of light,' but was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted sufferer. Say no more, therefore, as the murmuring Israelites said: 'If the Lord be with us, why have these evils apprehended us?' for if to be afflicted be a sign that God hath forsaken a man, and refuses to own his religion or his question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murders the innocent, and puts the fatherless to death, and follows Providence by doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God suffers him,—he, I say, is the only saint and servant of God: and on the same ground the wolf and the fox may boast, when they scatter and devour a flock of lambs and harmless sheep.

PART II.

It follows now that we inquire concerning the reasons of the divine Providence in this administration of affairs, so far as he hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of his counsels and predestination. And for such an inquiry we have the precedent of the prophet Jeremiah: 'Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let us talk to thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root; they grow, yea they bring forth

fruit.’¹ Concerning which in general the prophet Malachi gives this account after the same complaint made: ‘And now we call the proud happy; and they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. They that feared the Lord, spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that the feared the Lord and thought on his name. And they shall be mine (saith the Lord of hosts) in that day when I bind up my jewels: and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.’² In this interval, which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoice who shall weep for ever; and ‘they that sow in tears’ shall have no cause to complain: when God gathers all the mourners into his kingdom, ‘they shall reap with joy.’

For innocence and joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And joy went not first; but when innocence went away, sorrow and sickness dispossessed joy of its habitation; and now this world must be always a scene of sorrows, and no joy can grow here but that which is imaginary and fantastic. There is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world, but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves in the hopes and designs of iniquity. He that covets his neighbour’s wife or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and cursed, to be a beast and

¹ Jer. xii. 1, 2.

² Mal. iii. 14, &c.

die, or to lie wallowing in his filthiness: but holy souls know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of paradise; and that sorrow, which was brought in by sin, must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of innocence: the same instant that quits us from sin and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world. In the meantime,

God afflicts the godly, that he might manifest many of his attributes, and his servants exercise many of their virtues.

Nec fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes,
Sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur:
Scilicet est aliud, quod nos cogatque regatque,
Majus, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges.

For, without the sufferings of saints, God should lose the glories, 1. of bringing good out of evil: 2. of being with us in tribulation: 3. of sustaining our infirmities: 4. of triumphing over the malice of his enemies. 5. Without the suffering of saints where were the exaltation of the cross, the conformity of the members to Christ their head, the coronets of martyrs? 6. where the trial of our faith? 7. or the exercise of long-suffering? 8. where were the opportunities to give God the greatest love; which cannot be but by dying and suffering for him? 9. How should that which the world calls folly, prove the greatest wisdom? 10. and God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? 11. By the suffering of saints, Christian religion is proved to be most excellent; whilst the iniquity and cruelty of the adversaries prove the *illecebra sectæ*, as Ter-

tullian's phrase is ; it invites men to consider the secret excellences of that religion, for which and in which men are so willing to die : for that religion must needs be worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortune. 12. That a man's nature is passible, is its best advantage ; for by it we are all redeemed : by the passiveness and sufferings of our Lord and brother we were all rescued from the portion of devils, and by our suffering we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of angels, who indeed can sing God's praise with a sweeter note, and obey him with a more unabated will, and execute his commands with a swifter wing and a greater power ; but they cannot die for God, they can lose no lands for him : and he that did so for all us, and commanded us to do so for him, is ascended far above all angels, and is heir of a greater glory. 13. ' Do this, and live,' was the covenant of the law ; but in the gospel it is, ' Suffer this, and live :—' He that forsaketh house and land, friends and life, for my sake, is my disciple.' 14. By the sufferings of saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errors to climb up into heresies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

———— παθὼν δὲ τε νήπιος ἔγνω·

" Affliction makes a fool leave his folly." If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly : but if Augustus Cæsar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

*Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit, hic diadema :*¹

¹ Juv. xiii. 105.

And in giving physic, we always call that just and fitting that is useful and profitable: no man complains of his physician's iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body; if the belly be punished to chastise the floods of humour, and the evils of a surfeit. Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for medicine; and God is then very careful of thy soul, when he will suppress every of its evils, when it first discomposes the order of things and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee, if a persecution draws thee from the vanities of a former prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? What loss is it? what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil than the greatest of sufferings? God smites some at the beginning of their sin; others, not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say that God is slack in punishing, and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous; for they find that God is apt enough to strike: and therefore, that he strikes them, and strikes not the other, is no defect of justice, but because there is not mercy in store for them that sin, and suffer not. 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to his servants; but then we must not call that a misery, which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because he hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envy that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: but if God forbear the wicked, that by his long sufferance they may be invited to repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted saints, thus:—for if God be so gracious

to the wicked, how much more is he to the godly ! and if sparing the wicked be a mercy ; then smiting the godly, being the expression of his greater kindness, affliction is of itself the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindness for the persecutors, so much as to invite them by kindness ; how much greater is his love to them that are persecuted ! And therefore his intercourse with them is also a greater favour : and, indeed, it is the surer way of securing the duty : fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it. Fair means are more apt to be abused than harsh physic : that may be turned into wantonness, but none but the impudent and grown sinners despise all God's judgments ; and therefore God chooses this way to deal with his erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great salvation. And yet if God spares not his children, how much less the reprobates ! and therefore, as sparing the latter commonly is a sad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16. For by this economy God gives us a great argument to prove the resurrection, since to his saints and servants he assigns sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of virtue ; it may be its instrument and handmaid, but not its reward : and therefore it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life : ' For if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable : ' it is St. Paul's argument to prove a beatifical resurrection. And we therefore may learn to estimate the state of the afflicted godly to be a mercy, great in proportion to the greatness of that reward, which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

It is a great matter, and infinite blessing, to

escape the pains of hell; and therefore that condition is also very blessed which God sends us, to create and confirm our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The sufferings of the saints are the sum of Christian philosophy: they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of heaven; whiles God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our country, where God shall be our portion, and angels our companions, and Christ our perpetual feast, and never-ceasing joy shall be our conditions and entertainment. 'O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions!'¹ But he that is uneasy in his body, and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his person, discomposed in his designs, who finds no pleasure, no rest here, will be glad to fix his heart where only he shall have what he can desire, and what can make him happy. As long as the waters of persecutions are on the earth, so long we dwell in the ark; but where the land is dry, the dove itself will be tempted to a wandering course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18. Christ nourisheth his church by sufferings. 19. He hath given a single blessing to all other graces; but to them that are 'persecuted,' he hath promised a double one:² it being a double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, and then to be afflicted like him. 20. Without this, the miracles of patience, which God hath given to fortify the spirits of the saints, would signify nothing. *Nemo enim tolerare tanta velit sine causa, nec potuit sine*

¹ Eccles. iv. 11.² Matt. v. 12.

Deo: "As no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God;" and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not sorrow and persecution. And therefore, without this condition of suffering, the Spirit of God shall lose that glorious attribute of the Holy Ghost, 'the Comforter.' 21. Is there any thing more yet? Yes. They that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ, 'shall sit on the thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel;' so said Christ to his disciples. Nay, 'the saints shall judge angels,' saith St. Paul: well therefore might St. Paul say, 'I rejoice exceedingly in tribulation.' It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoice exceedingly; and so it was. For since patience is necessary that we receive the promise, and tribulation does work this; 'for a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope, even an exceeding weight of glory;' we have no reason to 'think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if it were a strange thing.' It can be no hurt. The church is like Moses's bush; when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed, but made full of miracle, full of splendour, full of God: and unless we can find something that God cannot turn into joy, we have reason not only to be patient, but rejoice, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause: for love is the soul of Christianity, and suffering is the soul of love. To be innocent and to be persecuted are the body and soul of Christianity. 'I, John, your brother, and partaker in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,' said St. John;¹ those were the

¹ Rev. i. 9.

titles and ornaments of his profession : that is, ' I, John, your fellow-Christian ;' that is the plain song of the former descant. He, therefore, that is troubled when he is afflicted in his outward man, that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds on the ruin of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a beggar, and a sinner be rich with oppression ; that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied and unrelieved ; may as well wonder that carrion-crows should feed themselves fat on a fair horse, far better than themselves ; or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted into glory. That man knows nothing of nature, or Providence, or Christianity, or the rewards of virtue, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of his loving-kindness, or the rewards of heaven, or the glorifications of Christ's exalted humanity, or the precepts of the gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of God's dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings in the cause of righteousness, for the securing of a virtue, for the imitation of Christ, and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwise ; the world may as well cease to be measured by time, as good men to suffer affliction. I end this point with the words of St. Paul : ' Let as many as are perfect be thus minded : and if any man be otherwise minded, God also will reveal this unto you ;'¹ *this*, of the covenant of sufferings,

¹ Phil. iii. 15.

concerning which the old prophets and holy men of the temple had many thoughts of heart : but in the full sufferings of the gospel there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the sufferings. I have now given you an account of some of those reasons, why God hath so disposed that at this time, that is, under the period of the gospel, ' Judgment must begin at the house of God : ' and they are either τιμώριαι, or δοκιμάσιαι, or μορτήριον, or imitation of Christ's λύτρον : ' chastisements,' or ' trials,' or ' martyrdom,' or ' a conformity to the sufferings of the holy Jesus.'

But now, besides all the premises, we have another account to make concerning the prosperity of the wicked : ' For if judgment first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? ' That is the question of the apostle, and is the great instrument of comfort to persons ill-treated in the actions of the world. The first ages of the church lived on promises and prophecies ; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and the others are of a continual and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day, therefore we and all the following ages live on promises and experience. And although the servants of God have suffered many calamities from the tyranny and prevalency of evil men, their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamental truths of Christianity, that all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the persecutions of the godly able to make a good man miserable, nor yet their sadnesses arguments of God's displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his busi-

ness; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them: for who are fit to be hangmen and executioners of public wrath, but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder, that they whose cause wants reason, should betake themselves to the sword? that what he cannot persuade, he may wrest? Only we must not judge of the things of God by the measures of men. *Tὰ ἀνθρώπινα*, 'the things of men,' have this world for their stage and their reward; but the 'things of God' relate to the world to come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and by the end of all; not by events intermedial, which are varied by a thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were unprosperous,—as most certain they are; and if all good persons were temporally blessed,—as most certainly they are not; yet this would not move us to become virtuous. 'If an angel should come from heaven, or one arise from the dead,' and preach repentance, or justice and temperance, all this would be ineffectual to those to whom the plain doctrines of God, delivered in the law and the prophets, will not suffice.

For why should God work a sign to make us to believe that we ought to do justice, if we already believe he hath commanded it? No man can need a miracle for the confirmation of that which he already believes to be the command of God: and when God hath expressly bidden us to 'obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, the king as supreme, and his deputies assent by him;' it is a strange infidelity to think, that a rebellion against the ordinance of God can be sanctified by

the success and prevalency of them that destroy the authority, and the person, and the law, and the religion. The sin cannot grow to its height, if it be crushed at the beginning; unless it prosper in its progress, a man cannot easily fill up the measure of his iniquity; but then that sin swells to its fulness by prosperity, and grows too big to be suppressed without a miracle; it is so far from excusing or lessening the sin, that nothing doth so nurse the sin as it. It is not virtue, because it is prosperous, but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be so great.

Facere omnia sæve
Non impune licet, nisi cum facis ——— 1

“A little crime is sure to smart; but when the sinner is grown rich and prosperous and powerful, he gets impunity.”

But that is not innocence; and if prosperity were the voice of God to approve an action, then no man were vicious but he that is punished, and nothing were rebellion but that which cannot be easily suppressed; and no man were a pirate but he that robs with a little vessel; and no man could be a tyrant but he that is no prince; and no man an unjust invader of his neighbour's rights, but he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and loud, then it calls to heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long a growing, when it hath thriven under the devil's managing; when God hath long suffered it, and with patience, in vain expecting the repentance of a sinner. ‘He

¹ Lucan, viii. 492.

that treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished and a thriving sinner : but then it is the sin that thrives, not the man : and that is the mistake on this whole question ; for the sin cannot thrive unless the man goes on without apparent punishment and restraint. And all that the man gets by it is, that by a continual course of sin he is prepared for an intolerable ruin. The Spirit of God bids us look on the end of these men ; not the way they walk, or the instrument of that pompous death. When Epaminondas was asked which of the three was happiest, himself, Chabrias, or Iphicrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead ; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had seen the Vandals besiege the city of Hippo, and had known the barbarousness of that unchristened people, and had observed that St. Austin, with all his prayers and vows, could not obtain peace in his own days, not so much as a reprieve for the persecution, and then had observed St. Austin die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible than the reward of his piety and holy religion. When Louis, surnamed Pius, went his voyage to Palestine on a holy end, and for the glory of God, to fight against the Saracens and Turks and Mamelukes, the world did promise to themselves that a good cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man ; but the event was far otherwise : his brother Robert was killed, and his army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the money which by his mother was sent for his redemption, was cast away in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last town the Christians had in Egypt, and brought

home the cross of Christ on his shoulder, in a real pressure and participation of his Master's sufferings. When Charles the Fifth went to Algiers to suppress pirates and unchristened villains, the cause was more confident than the event was prosperous; and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storm, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when religious persons rose to matins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers; but the providence of God trod on those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery: his navy was beat in pieces, and his design ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever cause more baffled than the Christian cause by the Turks in all Asia and Africa, and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a calamity? What prince was ever more unfortunate than Henry the Sixth of England? and yet that age saw none more pious and devout. And the title of the house of Lancaster was advanced against the right of York for three descents. But then what was the end of these things? The persecuted men were made saints, and their memories are preserved in honour, and their souls shall reign for ever. And some good men were engaged in a wrong cause, and the good cause was sometimes managed by evil men; till that the suppressed cause was lifted up by God, in the hands of a young and prosperous prince, and at last both interests were satisfied in the conjunction of two roses, which was brought to issue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the divine providence. And there is no age, no history, no state, no great change in the world, but hath ministered an example of an afflicted truth, and a

prevailing sin: for I will never more call that sinner prosperous, who, after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die and perish miserably; for at the same rate we may envy the happiness of a poor fisherman, who, while his nets were drying, slept on the rock, and dreamed that he was made a king; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy, falls down from the rock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities, looses his little portion of pleasure and innocent solaces he had, from the sound sleep and little cares of his humble cottage.

And what is the prosperity of the wicked? To dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to despatch, and great cares to master: these things are of themselves neither good nor bad. But consider, would any man amongst us, looking and considering beforehand, kill his lawful king, to be heir of all that which I have named? Would any of you choose to have God angry with you on these terms? Would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good would not choose it. Would any of you die an atheist, that you might live in plenty and power? I believe you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive on the stock of a great sin. For if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his soul up at a certain day, it may be twenty years hence, on the condition he might, for twenty years, have his vain desires; should we not think that person infinitely miserable? Every prosperous thriving sinner is in the same condition: within these twenty years

he shall be thrown into the portion of devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasy on him that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. Add that God defers the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their sin, it may and does serve many ends of providence and mercy, but serves no end that any evil man can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

Bias said well to a vicious person, *Non metuo ne non sis daturus pœnas, sed metuo ne id non sim visurus*: "He was sure the man should be punished; he was not sure he should live to see it." And though the Nessimians, that were betrayed and slain by Aristocrates in the battle of Cyprus, were not made alive again, yet the justice of God was admired, and treason infinitely disgraced, when, twenty years after, the treason was discovered, and the traitor punished with a horrid death. Lyciscus gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipped in water, might rot off, if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did. 'Slay them not, O Lord, lest my people forget it,' saith David. If punishment were instantly and totally inflicted, it would be but a sudden and single document: but a slow and lingering judgment, and a wrath breaking out in the next age, is like a universal proposition, teaching our posterity that God was angry all the while, that he had a long indignation in his breast, that he would not forget.

to take vengeance. And it is a demonstration, that even the prosperous sins of the present age will find the same period in the Divine revenge, when men see a judgment on the nephews¹ for the sins of their grandfathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the days of their ancestors.

We know that when, in Henry the Eighth or Edward the Sixth's days, some great men pulled down churches and built palaces, and robbed religion of its just encouragements and advantages, the men that did it were sacrilegious: and we find also, that God hath been punishing that great sin ever since; and hath displayed to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes, against whom God was so angry, that he would show his displeasure for a hundred years together. When Herod had killed the babes of Bethlehem, it was seven years before God called him to an account: but he that looks on the end of that man, would rather choose the fate of the oppressed babes, than of the prevailing and triumphing tyrant. It was forty years before God punished the Jews for the execrable murder committed on the person of their King, the holy Jesus; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attributed it to their killing of St. James, their bishop, and seemed to forget the greater crime. But *non eventu rerum, sed fide verborum stamus*; "We are to stand to the truth of God's word, not to the event of things:" because God hath given us a rule, but hath left the judgment to himself; and we die so quickly (and God measures all things

¹ *Nepotes*, grandchildren, descendants.

by this standard of eternity, and 'one thousand years to God is as but one day,') that we are not competent persons to measure the times of God's account, and the returns of judgment. We are dead before the arrow comes; but the man escapes not, unless his soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. 'They spend their days in plenty, and in a moment descend into hell.'¹ In the meantime they drink, and forget their sorrow; but they are condemned: they have drunk their hemlock; but the poison does not work yet: the bait is in their mouths, and they are sportive; but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruin. And let no man call the man fortunate, because his execution is deferred for a few days, when the very deferring shall increase and ascertain the condemnation.

But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing tyrant, we should find, even in the days of his joys, such allays and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and a thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytic under a load of sables, and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body: and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapped about a sickly and an uneasy soul. Apollodorus was a traitor and a tyrant, and the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune; but knew not that he

¹ Job, xxi. 13.

nourished scorpions in his breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with spectres and images of death ; his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of illusions ; his fancy was abused with real troubles and fantastic images, imagining that he saw the Scythians flaying him alive, his daughters, like pillars of fire, dancing round about a cauldron, in which himself was boiling and that his heart accused itself to be the cause of all these evils. And although all tyrants have not imaginative and fantastic consciences, yet all tyrants shall die and come to judgment ; and such a man is not to be feared, not at all to be envied. And, in the meantime, can he be said to escape who hath an unquiet conscience, who is already designed for hell ; he whom God hates, and the people curse, and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many desire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it ? Is this man a blessed man ? Is that man prosperous who hath stolen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is fain to defend it with the greatest difficulty and the greatest danger ? Does not he drink more sweetly that takes his beverage in an earthen vessel, than he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts nobody, and does not trust God for his safety, but does greater wickedness only to escape awhile unpunished for his former crimes ? *Auro bibitur venenum.* No man goes about to poison a poor man's pitcher, nor lays plots to forage his little garden made for the hospital of two bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythagorean herb-eaters.

—οὐδ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλεον ἡμῖν παντὸς,
Οὐδ' ὅσον ἐν μάλαχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μέγ' ὄνειαρ.¹

They that admire the happiness of a prosperous, prevailing tyrant, know not the felicities that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottages, and small fortunes

A Christian, so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to religion, is bold in all accidents; he dares die, and he dares be poor: but if the persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholden to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the riches, the less good they are, and by an overvaluing affection they become our danger and our sin: but, on the other side, death and persecution lose all the ill that they can have, if we do not set an edge on them by our fears and by our vices. From ourselves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may set their prices as we please: and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; and therefore that the prevailing oppressor, tyrant, or persecutor is infinitely miserable. Only let God choose by what instruments he will govern the world, by what instance himself would be served, by what ways he will chastise the failings, and exercise the duties, and reward the virtues of his servants. God sometimes punishes one sin with another; pride with adultery, drunkenness with murder, carelessness with irreligion, idleness with vanity, penury with oppression, irreligion with blasphemy, and that with atheism: and therefore it is no wonder if he punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate

¹ Hesiod, *Eργ. 40; Gaisford, p. 6.

persons to frame an army ; and Timoleon destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of soldiers who themselves were sacrilegious ; and physicians use poisons to expel poisons ; and all commonwealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of justice and executions ; we shall have no further cause to wonder, if God raises up the Assyrian to punish the Israelites, and the Egyptians to destroy the Assyrians, and the Ethiopians to scourge the Egyptians ; and at last his own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of separation, in the day when he makes up his jewels. God hath many ends of providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men. By them he not only checks the beginning errors and approaching sins of his predestinate ; but by them he changes governments, and alters kingdoms, and is terrible among the sons of men. For since it is one of his glories to convert evil into good, and that good into his own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of providence ; it becomes us only to dwell in duty, and to be silent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God ; and let him choose the time when he will prune his vine, and when he will burn his thorns ; how long he will smite his servants, and when he will destroy his enemies. In the days of the primitive persecutions, what prayers, how many sighings, how deep groans, how many bottles of tears, did God gather into his repository, all praying for ease and deliverances, for halcyon days and fine sunshine, ‘for nursing-fathers and nursing-mothers,’ for public assemblies and open and solemn sacraments ; and it was three hundred years before God would hear their prayers ; and all that while

the persecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe, and knew it not; and God 'kept for them the best wine until the last:' they ventured for a crown, and fought valiantly; they were 'faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life;' and they are honoured by God, by angels, and by men. Whereas in all the prosperous ages of the church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary; scarce any made illustrious with a miracle, which in the days of suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the persecution and troubles under it, we may please to remember, that twenty years hence (it may be sooner, it will not be much longer) all our cares and our troubles shall be dead; and then it shall be inquired how we did bear our sorrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause; and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the persecuted; and the 'persecutor shall be shut out amongst dogs and unbelievers.'

He that shrinks from the yoke of Christ, from the burden of the Lord, on his death-bed will have cause to remember that by that time all his persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him but rest, and crowns, and sceptres. When Lysimachus, impatient and overcome with thirst, gave up his kingdom to the Getæ, being a captive, and having drunk a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst now gone, he fetched a deep sigh, and said, "Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, lost so great a kingdom!" Such

will be their case, who, being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth and an easy fortune : they shall find themselves miserable in the separations of eternity, losing the glories of heaven for so little a pleasure, *illiberalis et ingrata voluptatis causa*, as Plutarch calls it, "for illiberal and ungrateful pleasure;" in which when a man hath entered, he loses the rights and privileges and honours of a good man, and gets nothing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes, or necessary to any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he needs neither God nor man to be revenger, having already, under his splendid robe, miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisy of his condition; being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vicious in their lives, and full of pageantry and outsides, but in their death miserable with calamities real, eternal, and insupportable. And if it could be otherwise, virtue itself would be reproached with the calamity.

I end with the advice of St. Paul : ' In nothing be terrified of your adversaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.'

PART III.

BUT now that the persecuted may at least be pitied, and assisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some rules by which they may learn to gather grapes from their thorns, and figs from their thistles; crowns from the cross,

glory from dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer persecution or sorrow; no rules can teach them to avoid that: but the evil of the suffering and the danger must be declined, and we must use some such spiritual arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine. For it were a hard thing first to be scourged, and then to be crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter: through the fiery trial and purging fire of afflictions to pass into hell, that is intolerable, and to be prevented with the following cautions; lest a man suffer like a fool and a malefactor, or inherit damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

1. They that suffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for him, let them do nothing against him. For certainly they think too highly of martyrdom, who believe it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may 'give his body to be burned, and yet have no charity:' and he that dies without charity, dies without God; for 'God is love.' And when those who fought in the days of the Maccabees for the defence of true religion, and were killed in those holy wars, yet, being dead, were found having about their necks *ιερώματα*, or pendants consecrated to idols of the Jamnenses, it much allayed the hope, which, by their dying in so good a cause, was entertained concerning their beatifical resurrection. He that overcomes his fear of death does well; but if he hath not also overcome his lust, or his anger, his baptism of blood will not wash him clean. Many things may make a man willing to die in a good cause;—public reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a confident resolution, and a masculine courage; or a

man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: but nothing can make a man live well, but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity, if every good cause could be managed by good men only; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good cause, but never that a good cause made those evil men good and holy. If the governor of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving Christian baptism, he had no more died a martyr than he lived a saint: for dying is not enough, and dying in a good cause is not enough; but then only we receive the crown of martyrdom, when our death is the seal of our life, and our life is a continual testimony of our duty, and both give testimony to the excellences of the religion, and glorify the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him; but it burns him if he be, like stubble, cheap, light, and useless; for martyrdom is the consummation of love. But then it must be supposed that this grace must have had its beginning, and its several stages and periods, and must have passed through labour to zeal, through all the regions of duty to the perfections of sufferings. And therefore it is a sad thing to observe how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a religion or such a cause; and though they dishonour their religion, or weigh down the cause with the prejudice of sin, believe all is swallowed up by one honourable name, or the appellative of one virtue. If God had forbid nothing but heresy and treason, then to have been a loyal man, or of a good belief,

had been enough ; but he that forbade rebellion, forbids also swearing and covetousness, rapine and oppression, lying and cruelty. And it is a sad thing to see a man not only to spend his time, and his wealth, and his money, and his friends, on his lust ; but to spend his sufferings too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly sin devour his martyrdom. He therefore that suffers in a good cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour to which God hath called him ; let him first deny his sins, and then ‘ deny himself,’ and then he may ‘ take up his cross and follow Christ ;’ ever remembering that no man pleases God in his death, who hath walked perversely in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God, must be indifferent what the instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the cause, so it be a cause of God ; and indifferent in the suffering, so it be of God’s appointment. For some men have a natural aversion to some vices or virtues, and a natural affection to others. One man will die for his friend, and another will die for his money : some men hate to be rebels, and will die for their prince ; but tempt them to suffer for the cause of the church, in which they were baptized, and in whose communion they look for heaven, and then they are tempted, and fall away. Or if God hath chosen the cause for them, and they have accepted it, yet themselves will choose the suffering. Right or wrong, some men will not endure a prison ; and some that can, yet choose the heaviest part of the burden, the pollution and stain of a sin, rather than lose their money ; and some had rather die twice than lose their estates once. In this, our rule is easy. Let us choose God, and

let God choose all the rest for us; it being indifferent to us, whether by poverty or shame, by a lingering or a sudden death, by the hands of a tyrant-prince, or the despised hands of a base usurper or a rebel, we receive the crown, and do honour to God and to religion.

3. Whoever suffer in a cause of God, from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, let them not be too forward to prognosticate evil and death to their enemies; but let them solace themselves in the assurance of the divine justice, by general consideration, and, in particular, pray for them that are our persecutors. Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of God against the Tyrians; and because he destroyed that city, God rewarded him with the spoil of Egypt: and it is not always certain that God will be angry with every man, by whose hand affliction comes on us. And sometimes two armies have met, and fought, and the wisest man amongst them could not say, that either of the princes had prevaricated either the laws of God or of nations; and yet, it may be, some superstitious, easy, and half-witted people of either side wonder that their enemies live so long. And there are very many cases of war, concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in such cases, he that yields and quits his title, rather than his charity, and the care of so many lives, is the wisest and the best man; yet, if neither of them will do so, let us not decree judgments from heaven in cases where we have no word from heaven, and thunder from our tribunals, where no voice of God hath declared the sentence. But in such cases, where there is an evident tyranny or injustice, let us do like the good Samaritan, who dressed the wounded man, but never pursued the

thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the cross with nobleness, and 'look up to Jesus, who endured the cross, and despised the shame:' but let us not take on us the office of God, who will judge the nations righteously, and when he hath delivered up our bodies, will rescue our souls from the hands of unrighteous judges. I remember in the story that Plutarch tells, concerning the soul of Thespesius, that it met with a prophetic genius, who told him many things that should happen afterward in the world; and the strangest of all was this—that there should be a king, *qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet*: "an excellent prince and a good man should be put to death by a rebel and usurping power:"—and yet, that prophetic soul could not tell, that those rebels should, within three years, die miserable and accursed deaths. And in that great prophecy, recorded by St. Paul, 'That in the last days, perilous times should come, and men should be traitors and selfish, having forms of godliness, and creeping into houses;' yet he could not tell us when these men should come to final shame and ruin: only by a general signification, he gave this sign of comfort to God's persecuted servants: 'but they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be manifest to all men;' that is, at long running, they shall shame themselves, and, 'for the elect's sake, those days of evil shall be shortened.' But you and I may be dead first: and therefore, only remember that they that, with a credulous heart and a loose tongue, are too decretory and enunciative of speedy judgments to their enemies, turn their religion into

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

² Ib. iii. 9.

revenge, and therefore do believe it will be so, because they vehemently desire it should be so; which all wise and good men ought to suspect, as less agreeing with that charity which overcomes all the sins and all the evils of the world, and sits down and rests in glory.

4. Do not trouble yourself by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it: for reflex acts on the suffering itself can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience, to temptation, or apostacy. He that measures the grains and scruples of his persecution, will soon sit down and call for ease, or for a reward; will think the time long, or his burden great; will be apt to complain of his condition, or set a greater value on his person. Look not back on him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the crown that is set before thee: and then consider, if the loss of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world, whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit; and if thy uneasy prison sets thy soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of suffering turns into crowns and sceptres, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual and habitual, permanent and persevering. For as the silkworm eateth itself out of a seed to become a little worm; and there feeding on the leaves of mulberries, it grows till its coat be off, and then works itself into a house of silk; then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its silk for man, and dieth, all white and winged, in the shape of a flying crea-

ture; so is the progress of souls. When they are regenerate by baptism, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of Scriptures, and the fruits of the vine, and the joys of the sacrament, they encircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and virtuous habits; then, by leaving their blood, which is the church's seed, to raise up a new generation to God, they leave a blessed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their employment was in this world to suffer it. *Fiat voluntas tua* is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification; 'Thy will be done' on us: and if from thence also we translate it into an active sense, and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of Christians, and shall receive the rewards of martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral aids and fantastic assistances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company: and so Phocion encouraged a timorous Greek, condemned to die; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion: and when forty martyrs in Cappadocia suffered, and that a soldier, standing by, came and supplied the place of the one apostate, who fell from his crown, being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen confessors, and turned them into consummate martyrs. But if martyrdom were but a fantastic thing, or relied on vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then very necessary to be assisted by images of things, and any thing less than the proper instruments of religion: but since it is the greatest

action of the religion, and relies on the most excellent promises, and its formality is to be an action of love, and nothing is more firmly chosen (by an after-election at least) than an act of love; to support martyrdom, or the duty of sufferings, by false arches and exterior circumstances, is to build a tower on the beams of the sun, or to set up a wooden ladder to climb up to heaven; the soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy. And let no man hope to glorify God and go to heaven by a life of sufferings, unless he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his choice, his patience, and confidence, in the causes of virtue and religion, like beams, and warmth, and influence from the body of the sun. Some there are that fall under the burden, when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the will in patience and resignation, but endeavour to lighten the burden in imagination; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that relies on them rushes into coldness, recidivation, and lukewarmness: and, among all instances, that of the main question of the text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and less severe persons.

When men choose a good cause on confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of virtue or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost, when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and success to a greater evil: for they have not learned to distinguish a great growing sin from a thriving and prosperous fortune.

They that believe and choose because of idle

fears and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit treason for fear of being blasted, may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidental hardnensses; and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and if the fancy of the standers-by, or the hearing of a cock crow, can add any collateral aids to thy weakness, refuse it not: but let thy state of sufferings begin with choice, and be confirmed with knowledge, and rely on love, and the aids of God, and the expectations of heaven, and the present sense of duty; and then the action will be as glorious in the event, as it is prudent in the enterprise, and religious in the prosecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christ's school, and entered thee into a state of sufferings, remember the advantages of that state: consider how unsavoury the things of the world appear to thee, when thou art under the arrest of death; remember with what comforts the Spirit of God assists thy spirit; set down in thy heart all those intercourses which happen between God and thy own soul, the sweetnesses of religion, the vanity of sin's appearances, thy newly-entertained resolutions, thy longings after heaven, and all the things of God. And if God finishes thy persecution with death, proceed in them: if he restores thee to the light of the world, and a temporal refreshment, change but the scene of sufferings in an active life, and converse with God on the same principles on which, in thy state of sufferings,

thou didst build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not less in love with heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy spirit be now as humble as before it was broken; and, to whatsoever degree of sobriety or austerity thy suffering condition did enforce thee, if it may be turned into virtue, when God restores thee, (because then it was necessary thou shouldst entertain it by an after-choice,) do it now also by a pre-election; that thou mayest say with David, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy commandments.' And Paphnutius did not do his soul more advantage, when he lost his right eye, and suffered his left knee to be cut off for Christianity and the cause of God than that, in the days of Constantine and the church's peace, he lived not in the toleration but in the active piety of a martyr's condition; not now a confessor of the faith only, but of the charity of a Christian. We may every one live to have need of these rules; and I do not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it: and to whatsoever degree of sufferings God shall call us, we see what advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we ourselves may make of it. I now proceed to make use of all the former discourse, by removing it a little further even into its utmost spiritual sense: which the apostle does in the last words of the text: 'If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?'

1. These words are taken out of the Proverbs,¹ according to the translation of the Seventy. 'If the righteous scarcely be saved:' when the word

¹ Chap. xi. 31.

μόλις implies that he is safe, but by intermedial difficulties : and *σώζεται*, he is safe in the midst of his persecutions ; they may disturb his rest, and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery chariot to Elias ; he is encircled with fire, and rare circumstances, and strange usages, but is carried up to heaven 'in a robe of flames. And so was Noah safe when the flood came ; and was the great type and instance too of the verification of this proposition ; he was *ὁ δίκαιος* and *δικαιοσύνης κήρυξ*, ' a just man, and a preacher of righteousness ;' he was put into a strange condition, perpetually wandering, shut up in a prison of wood, living on faith, having never had the experience of being safe in floods. And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every motion and dancing of the barge, seemed a danger, and made them cling fast on their fellows ; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sat under a tree, while a gentle wind shook the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade : and the unskilful, inexperienced Christian shrieks out, whenever his vessel shakes, thinking it always a danger, that the watery pavement is not stable and resident, like a rock ; and yet all his danger is in himself, none at all from without : for he is indeed moving on the waters, but fastened to a rock : faith is his foundation, and hope is his anchor, and death is his harbour, and Christ is his pilot, and heaven is his country ; and all the evils of poverty, or affronts of tribunals and evil judges, of fears and sadder apprehensions, are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise, and drive faster to the harbour ; and if we do not leave the ship, and leap

into the sea; quit the interests of religion, and run to the securities of the world; cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes; grow impatient, and hug a wave, and die in its embraces, we are as safe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, than in a calm when we are befriended with the world.

2. But *μόλις* may also signify *raro*: 'If the righteous is seldom safe:' which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense. God sometimes sends halcyon days to his church; and when he promised 'kings and queens to be their nurses,' he intended it for a blessing; and yet this blessing does oftentimes so ill succeed, that it is the greater blessing of the two, not to give us that blessing too freely. But *μόλις*, this is scarcely done; and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing piety with such arguments as comply with our infirmities: and though it be a shame to us to need such allecives and infant gauds, such which the heathen world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need; God, who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as he corroborates our willing spirits with proper entertainments, so also he supports our weak flesh, and not only cheers an afflicted soul with beams of light, and antepasts and earnest of glory, but is kind also to our man of flesh and weakness; and to this purpose he sends thunderbolts from heaven on evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counsels, cursing their posterity, and ruining their families,

— ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε

"Ἡ τῶν γε στρατὸν εὐρὺν ἀπώλεσεν, ἢ ὕγε τεῖχος,

"Ἡ νέας ἐν πόντῳ Κοονίδης ἀποτίννυται αὐτῶν.

¹ Hesiod, "Εργ. 243. Gaisford.

"Sometimes God destroys their armies, or their strong holds, sometimes breaks their ships." But this happens either for the weakness of some of his servants, and their too great aptness to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when he will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of his providence; and yet, if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, only Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous: and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger; but the other was as himself could wish it, rich, and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong, and amorous, and voluptuous, and so he fell; and though his fall was, yet his recovery was not on record.

And yet the worst of evils that happen to the godly, is better, temporally better, than the greatest external felicity of the wicked: that in all senses the question may be considerable and argumentative, 'If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear?' If it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference:—the godly man is timorous, and yet safe; tossed by the seas, and yet safe at anchor; impaired by evil accidents, and righted by divine comforts; made sad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence; abused by the world, and yet a heir of heaven; hated by men, and beloved by God: he loses one house, and gets a hundred; he quits a convenient lodging-room, and purchases a glorious country; is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience; he fares hardly, and sleeps sweetly; he

flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears; he is full of thought, but of no amazement; it is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted; he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good; and in the recompence of this he hath God for his father, Christ for his captain, the Holy Ghost for his supporter; so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But, though Paul and Silas sang psalms in prison, and under the hangman's whips, and in an earthquake; yet neither the jailer nor the persecuting magistrates could do so. For the prosperity of the wicked is like a winter's sun, or the joy of a condemned drunkard; it is a forgetfulness of his present danger, and his future sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency: he sits in the gates of the city, and judges others, and is condemned himself; he is honoured by the passers-by, and is thought happy, but he sighs deeply; 'he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them;' he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasy pillows which his thoughtful head hath discomposed; when he is waking, he dreams of greatness; when he sleeps he dreams of spectres and illusions: he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace; and in every unjust purchase, himself is the greatest loser. For, just on his oppression or injustice, he is turned a devil, and God's enemy, a wolf to his brother: he is unsafe by reason of his sin: for he

hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the laws, the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person ; and God and men, the laws of nations and private societies, stand on their defence against this man : he is unsafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched and suspected, and, it may be, dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool, and leaves a curse to his posterity.

Τοῦδ' ἔτ' ἀμυροτέρῃ γενεῇ μετόπισθε λήλειπται.¹

"He leaves a generation of blacker children behind him : " so the poet describes the cursedness of their posterity ; and their memory sits down to eternal ages in dishonour. And by this time let them cast up their accounts, and see if, of all their violent purchases, they carry any thing with them to the grave but sin, and a guilty conscience, and a polluted soul ; the anger of God, and the shame of men. And what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate, for which thou diedst for ever ?

And let but a sober answerer tell me, if any in the world be more distant either from goodness or happiness, than to scatter the plague of an accursed soul on our dearest children ; to make a universal curse ; to be the fountain of a mischief ; to be such a person whom our children and nephews shall hate, and despise, and curse, when they groan under the burden of that plague which their

¹ Hesiod, "Erg." 282.

fathers' sins brought on the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verify the intent of my text: 'If the righteous scarcely be saved,' or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable.

Νῦν δὲ ἐγὼ μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δίκαιος
Εἶην, μήτ' ἐμὸς υἱός, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον
ἔμμεναι———. ¹

"Neither I nor my son," said the oldest of the Greek poets, "would be virtuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable." No, not only in the end of affairs, and at sunset, but all the day long, the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner are very miserable. And there needs no other argument to be added but this one great testimony, that though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable, but turns unto their advantages;² and that is the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin; to whom even their sunshine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather: and that is the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows; and the wicked are such, whom prosperity itself cannot make fortunate.

3. And yet after all this, it is but *μόλις σώζεται*, not *μόλις σωθήσεται*, he 'escapes but hardly' here; it will be well enough with him hereafter. Isaac

¹ Hes. *Εργ. 268; Gaisf. p. 22.

² Quis curam negis esse te Deorum.

digged three wells. The first was called 'contention;' for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword. The second well was not altogether so hard a purchase: he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room, and his fortune swelled, and he called his well 'enlargement.' But his third he called 'abundance;' and then he dipped his foot in oil, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man first 'sows in tears;' he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: but if they pass through a torrent, and virtue becomes easy and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprightly by the visitations of God, and refreshment of his Spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάρουθεν ἔθηκαν
 Αθάνατοι· μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτήν,
 Καὶ τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον· ἐπήν δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηται,
 Ῥηϊδίη δ' ἥπειτα πέλει, χαλεπή περ ἐοῦσα.¹

"At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons: the second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendant labours." But when the Christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God pro-

¹ Hesiod, "Erg." 287; Gaisford, p. 23.

fathers' sins brought on the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verify the intent of my text: 'If the righteous scarcely be saved,' or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable.

Νῦν δὲ ἰγὼ μὴτ' αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δίκαιος
ἔσται, μὴτ' ἑμὸς υἱός, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον
ἔργασται———.

"Neither I nor my son," said the oldest of the Greek poets, "would be virtuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable." No, not only in the end of affairs, and at sunset, but all the day long, the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner are very miserable. And there needs no other argument to be added but this one great testimony, that though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable, but turns unto their advantages;² and that is the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin; to whom even their sunshine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather: and this is the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their afflictions, but the wicked are made so by their prosperity. And if affliction cannot make the godly miserable, it is but a small trial to the wicked.

S. And yet it is but a small trial to the wicked.
not making them miserable, it is but a small trial to the wicked.
it will be a small trial to the wicked.

digged three wells. The first was called 'contention;' for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword. The second well was not altogether so hard a purchase: he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room, and his fortune swelled, and he called his well 'enlargement.' But his third he called 'abundance;' and then he dipped his foot in oil, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man first 'sows in tears;' he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: but if they pass through a torrent, and virtue becomes easy and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprightly by the visitations of God, and refreshment of his Spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

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¹ Hesiod, "Erg." 287; Gaisford, p. 23.

mised to his people : ' I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.'¹ So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans, by the infinite and eternal hallelújahs ; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and ' in the cross of the Lord Jesus.' Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration ; days without nights, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening : and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David say, ' The cords' of my tent, my ropes, and the sorrow of my pilgrimage, ' fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage.' And when persecution hews a man down from a high fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence

¹ Isaiah, liv. 8.

to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul's prison, and let the soul forth to fly to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments; the executioner tore off their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched the skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to his servants; he rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance. But if we would take the measures of images, we must not take the height of the base, but the proportion of the members; nor yet measure the estates of men by their big-looking supporter, or the circumstance of an exterior advantage, but by its proper commensuration in itself, as it stands in its order to eternity; and then the godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution, ought to be relieved by us, but needs not be pitied in the sum of affairs. But since the two estates of the world are measured by time and by eternity, and divided by joy and sorrow, and no man shall have his portion of joys in both durations; the state of those men is insupportably miserable, who are fatted for slaughter, and are crowned like beasts for sacrifice; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their purchases but by

communications with others, and themselves have the least share; but themselves are alone in the misery and the saddest dangers, and they possess the whole portion of sorrows; to whom their prosperity gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppress a neighbour, or to nurse a lust, to increase folly and treasure up calamity. And did ever any man see, or story tell, that any tyrant-prince kissed his rods and axes, his sword of justice, and his imperial ensigns of power? they shine like a taper to all things but itself. But we read of many martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and saluted their hangman with great endearments; and yet, abating the incursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils; and such they are with which a wise and a good man may be in love. And till the sinners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God and their portions of eternity; till they can rejoice in death, and long for a resurrection, and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of judgment, we must conclude that their glass gems and finest pageantry, their splendid outsides and great powers of evil, cannot make amends for that estate of misery, which is their portion with a certainty as great as is the truth of God, and all the articles of the Christian creed. Miserable men are they, who cannot be blessed unless there be no day of judgment; who must perish, unless the word of God should fail. If that be all their hopes, then we may, with a sad spirit and a soul of pity, inquire into the question of the text: 'Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?' Even there where God's face shall

never shine; where there shall be fire and no light; where there shall be no angels but what are many thousand years turned into devils; where no good man shall ever dwell, and from whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. 'O my God, let my soul never come into their counsels nor lie down in their sorrows.'

THE END.



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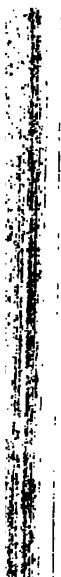
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